Side activities by non-farmers

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SIDE ACTIVITIES BY NON-FARMERS

In search of personal and rural development

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Το bb mou

Και στους λατρευτούς γονείς μου

Preface

If someone had asked me four years ago if I would like to do a PhD, I would have thought it unimaginable. The opportunity came from the Onassis Foundation in Greece, where they offered me funding to conduct my PhD in the Netherlands. Now, four years later, I realize that sometimes the best things in life come when you are not expecting them. Just like that. So it was with this PhD research adventure. Of course, the realization of this PhD would not have been possible without the contribution, help, support and love of many people whom I would like to thank.

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Marianna Markantoni,
Groningen, January 2012

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Five chapters included in this PhD dissertation are reprinted from the following publications and manuscripts:

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1 Introduction

1 Introduction

1.1 Motivation

In the past 20 years, rural areas in Western societies have undergone many socioeconomic changes (Dammers & Keiner 2006; EC 2007; O'Connor et al. 2006). Although in many rural parts of Europe the agricultural sector is still often viewed as the mainstay of the rural economy, in general, rural employment is no longer dominated by agriculture (Terluin et al. 2010). The decreasing number of farms,[1] mainly due to scale enlargement, has contributed to the replacement of agricultural activities by new economic activities (OECD 2009; Strijker 2000). As a result, rural areas are becoming increasingly multifunctional areas. They are not only places for primary agricultural production, they are also becoming places for living, working, leisure and recreation (Blekesaune et al. 2010; Steenbekkers et al. 2006; Van Dam et al. 2002). Additionally, the redefinition of agriculture (Marsden 1999) and the shift in the geographical imagination of rurality in relation to consumption and leisure (Hadjimichalis 2003) have changed the countryside into a more diverse rural space, creating room for non-agricultural consumption functions and creating a new context for rural socioeconomic development.

Although rural areas in the Netherlands are still dominated by agricultural land use (CBS 2010), in general the above developments are mirrored there too (SER 2005; Steenbekkers et al. 2008).[2] The new functions and rural developments are associated with an increasing interest in non-farming uses in rural areas (Brouwer & Van der Heide 2009). According to Broekhuizen et al. (1997, p. 189), 'the countryside is a birth-place of new economic activities'. These activities include campsites, farm restaurants, care farms, childcare services, art galleries, recreational sites in rural areas, bed and breakfasts or service firms in old farmhouses (see Broekhuizen et al. 1997 and Daalhuizen et al. 2003). The emergence of these activities in rural areas can take the form of both *main* and *side* activities, and can be initiated by *farmers* and by *non-farmer* entrepreneurs. Main activities are those which provide a primary income (farming for farmers, other activities on the site of the rural household or elsewhere/non-rural for non-farmers), while side activities are small-scale activities providing a supplementary income for the household.

[1] In the Netherlands, for example, the number of agricultural holdings in the period 2000-2010 fell from 97,389 to 72,324 (a decrease of 26%) (LEI & CBS 2011).

[2] In terms of land use, there has been a steady decrease in areas designated for agriculture from the mid-1990s on in the Netherlands. Approximately two-thirds of the 'lost' area received a 'built environment' designation, the remaining land received designations for recreation (14%), nature (10%), water (6%) and infrastructure (3%). It is expected that agricultural land use will continue to decrease by another 4% by 2035, to be converted to nature and recreation areas and to provide new land for more housing (Steenbekkers et al. 2008).

Much research has been done on main activities, i.e. small businesses situated in rural areas (see Atterton & Affleck 2010; Kalantaridis 2006; Newbery & Bosworth 2010; Patterson & Anderson 2003; Raley & Moxey 2000; Vitartas 2011; see also the reference list in Kuhmonen 2010). In contrast, research into side activities in rural areas, especially those initiated by non-farmer entrepreneurs, have received scant attention in literature on rural entrepreneurship and policy. Atterton and Affleck (2010) for example, reveal that 44 percent of rural small business owners (non-farmers) in the north east of England had a side activity but they provide no further discussion of them. It is conceivable that a key reason for this relative 'invisibility' of side activities in research is their small scale, their perceived low economic potential in renewing rural areas, and also because much of the policy attention has been focusing on farmers.

With regard to rural renewal studies (*plattelandsvernieuwing* in Dutch), the centre of attention has always been the farm household and the abilities of farmers to survive the agricultural decline and to decrease their dependence on agricultural activities (see Herslund 2007; O'Connor et al. 2006; OECD 2009; Van der Ploeg et al. 2000; Van der Ploeg 2003; Van Huylenbroeck & Durand 2004). A key reason for this attention is that farmers not only use a great amount of rural resources and amenities (e.g. land, space) but also because of the links they construct between the natural environment, rural landscapes and the socioeconomic development of the rural areas (Van der Ploeg & Renting 2000). Additionally, Knickel and Renting (2000, p. 514) implore us to acknowledge that 'farming, more than any other rural activity, has the capacity to play an integrating role in rural development'. Farmers are thus perceived as the crucial actors for the 'rural', while other rural (non-farmer) inhabitants seem to have peripheral value as potential actors in contributing to the development of rural communities – for example by initiating a side activity on the site of a rural household.

A great deal of research has been conducted into farmers and their side activities, mainly as addressing a need for an income supplement (see also OECD 2009). These activities are described in terms such as pluriactivity, multifunctionality and farm diversification (see for example Barbieri & Mahoney 2009; Jongeneel et al. 2008; Rønning & Kolvereid 2006; Van Huylenbroeck et al. 2007). For instance, a recent OECD report (2009) revealed that farm households increasingly depend on diverse sources of income outside farming and that on average more than one-third of farm households have 'other gainful activities'.[3] A case in point is the Netherlands, where a report on multifunctional agriculture (see Roest & Schoorlemmer 2010) revealed the growing interest in the side activities of farmers in terms of their type, number and turnover. More specifically, the report showed that activities like

[3] That is: 'every activity other than activity related to farm work […], carried out for remuneration (salary, wages, profits or other payments, including payments in kind)' (EC 2002).

tourism and recreation, nature conservation, selling products on the farm, farm education (*boerderijeducatie* in Dutch), agrarian childcare (*agrarische kinderopvang*) and care farming (*zorgboerderijen*) are becoming gradually more popular among farmers.

Considering the above, we observe that side activities initiated by non-farmer entrepreneurs in rural areas[4] are a forgotten group in the academic research of rural entrepreneurship, rural development and rural policy. Nevertheless, non-farmers' side activities may play a role in contributing to the development of rural communities, not so much economically but more at the individual and social level. Furthermore, side activities could have broader implications for diversifying and revitalizing rural economies, and also could play an important role in improving quality of life and wellbeing in rural areas than has previously been considered. The focus of this dissertation is thus on the side activities of non-farmers in rural areas, in a specific geographical context, the Netherlands, making this study the first to examine side activities in such detail.

In the following sections we first elaborate on how side activities fit into new lifestyles. Then theoretical considerations of the possible impacts of side activities on rural development and more specifically on the economic, social and physical environment are provided. Finally, the definition of side activities is elaborated in detail along with the aim of the study, followed by the research questions.

1.2 Changing lifestyles and side activities

Rural areas are generally subject to changing modern lifestyles, aimed at improving the quality of life and wellbeing of individuals. The initiation of side activities can be a result of new and modern lifestyles. Studying side activities will thus show their importance in the everyday lives of individuals, as well as their role in fulfilling personal/family needs and supporting desired 'rural' lifestyles.

The lifestyles of rural people and rural perceptions in Western societies are changing rapidly (see Cloke et al. 2006; Haartsen et al. 2000; Ilbery 1998; Woods 2005). Characterizations such as insularity, a lack of technological appliances, a lack of services/facilities, poverty and a focus on agriculture are often attached to the image of the rural. Although some places still preserve these barriers and perceptions, the modernization of rural society has also romanticized the rural lifestyle as being part of the rural idyll (see Bell 2006; Haartsen et al. 2003; Van Dam et al. 2002; Woods 2005).[5] The rural has also been

[4] Rural areas in this dissertation refer to areas outside villages, that is, in the countryside outside built-up areas, with the exception of very small villages (<500 inhabitants): see Chapter 2.

[5] Although the aim of this section is not to define and discuss the rural idyll and imaginations of rurality in detail, we will provide a short overview in order to connect it to modern lifestyles and to side activities in rural areas.

portrayed as part of modern lifestyles for living, working and recreation (Norman 2004; Van Damet al. 2002). These reflect three main – especially in western societies – contemporary lifestyles, namely *rural residential lifestyles*, *rural entrepreneurial lifestyles* and *leisure lifestyles*, which are briefly discussed below.

With regard to the rural residential lifestyles, it is widely considered that many former urban and wealthy residents in search of a better quality of life or needing to experience the rural way of life are becoming owners of rural smallholdings, also called 'lifestyle blocks'[6] or new 'rural lifestyle estates' (Van den Berg & Wintjes 2000). This is also associated with the search for the rural idyll by modern urbanites (see Blekesaune 2010),[7] who are looking for a less hurried lifestyle (O'Reilly 2007), peace, quiet, space and green (Van Dam et al. 2002). The initiation of rural side activities could thus emerge from new rural inhabitants seeking to experience a rural way of living.

The second type of modern lifestyle relates to lifestyle entrepreneurs. Lifestyle businesses are often small businesses found in rural areas where quality of life is the central ingredient (Ateljevic & Doorne 2000). As Bridge et al. (2003, p. 186) note, a lifestyle business facilitates the lifestyle that individuals always wanted to have and accommodates the desires of their owners with regard to how they wish to live in non-economic terms (Lewis 2006). Furthermore, Gomez Velasco and Saleilles (2007), talking about lifestyle entrepreneurial motives, emphasize that a lifestyle orientation plays an important role in the lives of individuals. For example, it provides them with the opportunity to live in a rural and healthy environment, have time for family obligations (e.g. childcare, household tasks) but also for personal reasons such as being independent and satisfying their need for self-fulfillment (Buttner & Moore 1997). Accordingly, side activities could play a crucial role in current lifestyles in rural areas as potential lifestyle businesses.

The third type is associated with the need for leisure and recreation activities, especially when these happen in rural areas (Reeder & Brown 2005), and refers to the 'touristic idyll' (see Bell 2006). In that respect, Steenbekkers et al. (2008) argue that many people perceive the countryside as important as a recreational area. In the Netherlands for example, about 93 percent of those living in towns state that they sometimes visit the countryside for leisure and recreation purposes (Steenbekkers et al. 2008). This increased need for recreation can be explained by two main reasons. First, because the countryside is increasingly perceived to as contributing to people's wellbeing – a popular rural stereotype is that life there is more peaceful than in cities (Melberg 2003), and also because of its healthy environment (Lea

[6] The 'lifestyle block' trend refers to rural smallholdings attracting people who wish to live a rural lifestyle but whose income is derived from non-farming activities (Fairweather 1996; Paterson 2005).

[7] For second home owners, retirement movers or lifestyle movers.

2008; Van den Berg et al. 2007) – and to serve diverse needs for elderly people (emotional wellness) (Russ 2009). Therefore, there is scope for new leisure activities, including side activities, in rural areas. The second reason is related to the availability of free time.[8] People in western societies, in particular, are considered to have substantially more time after work to pursue more leisure activities, some of which can provide returns in terms of satisfaction, attractive lifestyles and personal identity (Stebbins 1998, p. 129). A consequence of the availability of free time is that people choose to be engaged in leisure activities, mainly for personal reasons that contribute to personal wellbeing (Stebbins 2006). In addition, Stebbins (1998) in his book 'After Work: The Search for an Optimal Leisure Lifestyle', describes the possibilities for engaging in an activity outside working hours as an amateur, hobbyist or volunteer. He argues that these activities are self-interested pursuits, as people perform them mainly for intrinsic reasons.

Side activities conducted in rural areas and operated from the rural home could be an important element in the everyday lives of individuals, their lifestyles, needs and identities, which are all defining features of wellbeing and quality of life. We would argue that side activities fit with new modern lifestyles for a variety of reasons related to the person.

1.3 Changing countryside and side activities

Side activities are expected to be important not only for the individual, contributing to personal needs and lifestyles but also may have implications at a broader local level. Therefore, the role and the impacts of side activities are examined in this study on two levels, the personal and the regional.

After showing earlier how side activities can fit into modern lifestyles, we turn now to their broader potential impact and relevance in developments and changes happening in rural areas.[9] In basic terms, these changes are captured in literature studies and policies by three main dimensions of rural restructuring. Ilbery (1998) for example, in the theoretical approaches to rural restructuring, summarizes them as economic, social and changes in the use of rural land. In the Netherlands, this triad was also used in a recent rural policy review (OECD 2008), where future developments in rural areas are structured around similar dimensions: rural economy, social conditions and land use and the environment.[10] The impact

[8] Note that this refers not only to rural but also to urban areas.

[9] These changes are not happening with the same intensity in all rural regions. Regional dynamics, population decline, entrepreneurial dynamics, global forces and political influences all interact to shape the economic and social development of rural areas.

[10] There are also other developments referring to demographic and political changes, as well as environmental sustainability and conservation of nature. However, for the purposes of this study, the focus is on the aforementioned three aspects, within which we believe side activities could play a role.

of side activities on rural development can be assessed in three main dimensions: *a. Rural economic restructuring, b. Social rural revitalization, c. Physical environment.*

a. Rural economic restructuring and side activities

Economic restructuring in rural areas is a prominent theme for rural development. Two main transformations are associated with this. The first refers to the decline of traditional rural economic activities, such as agriculture, forestry, fishing and mining. This decline is often accompanied by a rise in manufacturing, tourism and the service sector, showing how the rural economy is reshaped as a response of regional, local actors and as a response to the growth of consumerism and the contemporary demands of western societies (see Ilbery 1998; Woods 2005): the latter also signifying the second transformation and both referring to the potential impact of side activities at the regional level.

Related to the first transformation, rural societies have undergone a major transition from agricultural production towards becoming consumption economies, where agriculture alone can no longer be considered the mainstay (Woods 2005). Although rural areas in Europe are characterized by a great diversity in terms of the importance of farming, in general the role of agriculture as the basis of economy in rural societies is declining, mainly due to pricing pressures but also as a result of recent technological advances and commuting opportunities (OECD 2009; Van der Ploeg & Roep 2003).[11] In response to this rural communities have become more diversified in terms of their economic structure. An increasing number of farm enterprises, for example, conduct supplementary side activities alongside their main food production, transforming farms into multifunctional enterprises, delivering a range of products and services not directly related to agriculture (e.g. cultural and recreational activities, social services, farm tourism) (OECD 2009). Van der Ploeg (2003), describes these farmers as multifunctional rural entrepreneurs (*multifunctionele plattelandsondernemers* in Dutch).

The second transformation refers to the growth of contemporary consumerism and new societal demands, which have stimulated an expansion in services, social amenities, leisure and tourism activities (a higher level of needs),[12] making the 'rural' attractive to other non-farming businesses (EC 2010; Ilbery 1998; Woods 2005). As a result of the availability of space, nature and quiet, the countryside offers opportunities for new types of business creation, such as small campsites, nature development, recreational sites and, more recently,

[11] Agricultural changes do not have the same intensity in all the rural parts of Europe and do not result in the same social, cultural, environmental and political changes (Ilbery 1998).

[12] According to Maslow's theory (1948), once people have covered their basic level of needs (e.g. food, sleep, work) they begin looking for a better quality of life corresponding to a higher level of needs.

wellness and wellbeing centres (e.g. care homes for the elderly, care-healing centres).[13] The rural economy is thus changing. Farmers are no longer the only economic players in rural areas. Small business owners can also play an important role in rural economic development (see Anderson et al. 2010; Bosworth 2008; EC 2010), contributing to the regional economy by providing employment (Atterton & Affleck 2010; Raley & Moxey 2000; Vitartas 2011). In the Netherlands, for example, small-scale entrepreneurs are sometimes considered to form the 'economic backbone of rural areas', contributing to the vitality of rural regions through variation in the type of business, innovation and networks available, especially in areas experiencing population decline (Commissie Ruimtelijke Inrichting en Bereikbaarheid-RIB 2011; SER 2005).

In addition to farmers and small businesses as described above, side activities by non-farmers can potentially also play a role in the economic restructuring of rural areas, directly and indirectly. A direct route is through the provision of supplementary income (the role of side activities at the personal level). The economic impact of side activities may not only have a direct positive influence on the household income, but also on the local economy. Another important direct aspect of the economy that should not be ignored at this point is employment regeneration. It is to be expected that the creation of new business activities in rural areas will generate employment.

Alongside the direct impacts on the rural economy, there are also indirect ones. Rural tourism is one example. Especially side activities in the field of tourism and recreation can have the potential to attract tourists and visitors into rural areas and keep them longer in the region. In that sense, side activities could diversify the rural touristic sector and as a consequence strengthen the rural economy. Furthermore, by providing a variety of services and facilities (e.g. small shops, pedicure salons or dog grooming salons), side activities can also enrich the local services found in rural areas, thereby preventing, for example, 'abandoned' villages (RIB 2011).

In conclusion from the above, side activities, in addition to farming and other small enterprises in rural areas, could be potential vehicles for economic development by stimulating new economic opportunities and employment generation. Furthermore, they hold the potential to strengthen the tourist and services sectors and diversify the economic base of rural areas, all elements important for the economic revitalization of rural communities. However, because of their small size, their expected impact is rather limited.

[13] Mulder (2006), for example, has called the north of the Netherlands a 'Wellness Valley', providing a healthy and therapeutic environment.

b. Social rural revitalization and side activities

The second aspect to evaluating rural revitalization is the social dimension. Side activities could play a role in improving social conditions in rural communities, which is also perceived as an integral part and a prerequisite for successful rural development (see Falk & Kilpatrick 2000; Lyons 2002; Vanclay 2011). 'Rurality has also a social face', Bock (2010, p.30) argues, and this is important for mobilizing and connecting people, especially in rural areas, which are often perceived as socially disconnected. There are many ways to strengthen social capital.[14]

First, this could be achieved through an increase in social networks, participation in community activities and volunteer work (see Gralton & Vanclay 2009; Lee et al. 2005; Marsden 2009; Ray 2006). Vanclay (2011, p. 66) further argues that these aspects can increase social capital and the quality of life in rural areas and are considered a powerful way to revitalize rural areas. These benefits have also been reported in the OECD (2006) report 'The New Rural Paradigm', where many rural regions rely not only on their natural and cultural amenities, but also on their social capital to achieve growth.

Another way to build and activate social capital in rural areas is through rural enterprise development, or in other words, via small rural entrepreneurs (Flora et al. 1997; Lyons 2002). It is often recognized that small entrepreneurs in rural areas (especially in the recreation sector) play a key role in the development of the social structure in villages (RECRON 2010; STIRR en LNV 2010; Vitartas 2011; VROMRaad 2000; VROMRaad 2006). This could be achieved through the networks they create, which increase social interactions among locals (Johannisson 1995). Furthermore, by using local resources, small rural entrepreneurs are also perceived as strengthening social bonds with the locality and become in that sense integrated into the local area (Jack & Anderson 2002; Vitartas 2011).

Side activities, as a type of small rural enterprise, could also be part of an increase in social capital in rural communities for two main reasons. First – and especially regarding the activities related to the tourism and recreation sector (e.g. tea gardens, mini-restaurants, mini-campsites) – we can imagine that because of the high degree of social interaction they require, they can offer a space where rural residents and visitors can meet and socialize. Secondly, because of the variety of different types of services and facilities provided by side activities (e.g. pedicure salon, hairdresser), this could make villages and rural areas in general attractive places to visit and live. In relation to that, a recent RIB report (2011) notes that the availability and access to services could contribute to the quality of life and the presence of social capital in rural areas. It is therefore to be expected that side activities, through the variety of services and touristic activities, contribute to social rural revitalization.

[14] By social capital we refer to networks, cooperation and social relations (see Woolcock& Narayan 2000).

c. Physical environment and side activities

The third impact of side activities on rural areas refers to the changes in the physical rural environment and the 'use' of rural spaces. Over the last twenty years, rural areas in western societies have been marketed as multifunctional rural areas (Holmes 2006). Holmes (2006, pp. 142-143), for example, emphasizes that the multifunctional transition of rural areas 'involves a radical re-ordering in three basic purposes underlying human use of rural space, namely production, consumption and protection'. The rural space is thus not solely directed at agricultural production but it is also used for a variety of consumption purposes (e.g. residential, recreation, tourism and lifestyle changes), and for the protection of the environment and nature (e.g. biodiversity, landscape protection, sustainable resource management) (Holmes 2006). Another 'user' of rural space is the location and relocation of small non-agricultural enterprises (see North 1998) or the in-migrant entrepreneurs in rural areas (see Bosworth 2008). These can also play a role in shaping the landscape by using space, rural land and other rural qualities for their operation.

With the 'use' of the rural space for various functions and by different users,[15] a crucial problem many rural areas confront is the protection of landscape qualities along with their aesthetic, cultural, historical and natural values. In that respect, the European Commission (EC 2010) expresses concerns for the preservation of the character and the originality of rural areas. In search of the recent changes to the physical environment in rural areas, below we will discuss briefly two main types of 'users' of rural space and their role in altering the character of rural areas: farmers and rural non-farmer entrepreneurs.

First, agriculture as a large land user plays a crucial role in shaping the landscape and retaining cultural landscapes (Daalhuizen et al. 2008; OECD 2009). This is also reflected in the literature, where most attention is paid to farmers and more recently to multifunctional farmers and their impact (positive and negative) on the landscape and environment. Several examples of pluriactive farms have suggested a positive relationship between part-time farming and the quality of landscape (see Kristensen 1999; Marsden 1995). In contrast, Primdahl (1999) showed that farms can also contribute to rapid, 'undesirable' changes in the landscape (e.g. intensive planting of hedgerows in open landscape). Van der Vaart (2005) also demonstrated that the continuation of a farm has a more negative impact on buildings than if it is used for residential or business functions.

Alongside the impact of farmers, the impact of small businesses in rural areas owned by non-farmer entrepreneurs on the landscape has also been examined. It has been argued that the emergence of new entrepreneurial endeavours could change the shape of the rural landscape and 'rural morphology', contributing to diverse environmental and cultural

[15] We refer here to agriculture, residence, tourism and recreation and small enterprises.

landscapes (Keen 2004; Steenbekkers et al. 2008). Others, on the other hand, express their 'fears' about a negative impact on the landscape, mentioning that rural areas should be kept attractive and that 'cluttering' (*verrommeling*) should be avoided (RIB 2011). The latter refers to small-scale entrepreneurs in rural areas, who are often perceived as 'morphologically deviant', disturbing the landscape, mainly because they are not perceived to fit in with the agricultural surroundings (RIB 2011). In contrast, SER (2005) argues that these small entrepreneurial endeavours in particular can be regarded as a quality impulse for rural areas, contributing to the 'spatial' quality of the surroundings, especially when they reuse former agricultural buildings for non-agrarian functions (see also Daalhuizen et al. 2003). The emergence of these small businesses has positive effects, such as the diversification of the rural economy, the creation of employment, contribution to the viability of rural areas and the preservation of cultural and historical values (Daalhuizen et al. 2003).

A 'user' of rural space can also be a side activity which either preserves or alters the physical environment. Side activities such as mini-campsites, tea gardens, canoe rental providers or group accommodation use space and rural qualities (e.g. nature, peace, quiet or a healthy environment) to operate, but they can also contribute to the enhancement of rural qualities. It is therefore important to know to what degree side activities use the 'rural', if they preserve its visual qualities and whether they 'clutter' or preserve the landscape. Knowing for example how much space they require if they are only located in the direct vicinity of a house, or what rural qualities are necessary for their operation, could reveal their direct impact on the physical environment. Side activities could also be important for another reason. Especially if they are undertaken from former farmhouses, they may prevent them from becoming empty by reusing them and giving them a new function. It could therefore be expected that some side activities play a crucial role in preserving cultural and historical values or even preserving protected villages and landscapes. Last but not least, the impact of side activities on the physical environment could be also important for the spatial-rural policy schemes of local governments. Particularly if some side activities transform into main activities, this could have implications for land-use planning or for the specific conditions and rules that these activities have to comply with (e.g. building permits or zoning).

This study, by examining the role of side activities in the socioeconomic revitalization of rural areas, their role in the physical environment (regional level) and personal needs and lifestyles (personal level), will provide a more complete picture of the future opportunities and challenges for rural communities than a focus only on multifunctional farmers or small rural entrepreneurs would. Thus far, we have shown how side activities could contribute to recent developments in rural areas and on how they could 'change the countryside'. In order now to understand what a side activity is in our view, we turn to our definition.

1.4 Defining side activities

1.4.1 What is a side activity?

Previous studies have described diversifying income opportunities, which is mainly done in the context of the multifunctionality and pluriactivity of farmers (see Barbieri & Mahoney 2009; Jongeneel et al. 2008; Van Huylenbroeck et al. 2007). There, the overarching theme is the provision of a supplementary income for the rural household. Expressions of this 'supplementary income' theme are labelled as other gainful activities, para-agricultural farm enterprises, and non-farm and off-farm activities by farmers or their family members (see for example, Bessant 2006; Bock 2004; Herslund 2007; Kinsella et al. 2000). To differentiate this study from the studies above and from activities that provide a main source of income, we have chosen to use the term side activity.

> *A side activity is a home-based activity, which provides a supplementary income at the household level.*

This definition has two key elements. The first is the income potential of the side activities. Side activities do not provide a main source of income but a supplementary income at the household level. The term side activity also indicates that the owner of the side activity can either combine the side activity with paid employment (full time/part-time) or can combine the side activity with household tasks, while a partner provides the main household income. In addition to this latter group, there is a subgroup of owners who have a pension or are beneficiaries of a social security programme, rather than being in paid employment. For them, a side activity is also a supplementary activity.

The fact that side activities provide an income sets them apart from hobbies. Side activities aim to generate some income while hobbies do not necessarily do so. According to the Oxford English Dictionary,[16] a hobby is 'a favorite occupation or topic, pursued merely for the amusement or interest that it affords'. This could imply that in terms of non-economic rewards (e.g. pleasure or joy) some side activities can share some similarities with hobbies, because people do not have to make a living from either.

The second element of the definition is the place where these activities take place. Side activities are home-based activities, i.e. situated in a home. This means they are conducted on the same grounds and buildings as the home, within the domestic living area and/or using part of the garden and/or a barn.

[16] Source: Oxford English Dictionary, 2010 (retrieved from http://www.oed.com/ on 17/02/2010).

This study addresses a subgroup of all side activities. The subgroup is defined by two aspects: the side activities are carried out by non-farmers and the side activities are conducted in rural areas.

1.4.2 Non-farmers' side activities

The aforementioned definition of a side activity can be applied to both farmers and non-farmers. In this study we apply the term side activity only to non-farmer entrepreneurs.[17]

The reason to distinguish between farmers and non-farmer entrepreneurs and their side activities is not only because attention to the latter group has so far been absent but more importantly because of the potential impact of non-farmers' side activities on rural development (see Section 1.3) and on their role in fulfilling individual needs and desired lifestyles (see Section 1.2). Another reason to distinguish between farmers and non-farmers is that in general the latter have different types and amounts of resources at their disposal. Normally they have less land, no large buildings and they probably possess different knowledge, skills and techniques to farmers. The availability of different resources and skills could create different opportunities for the initiation of a side activity.

The magnitude, the types of non-farmer side activities and their potential role in rural development was initially examined in a pilot study in the Netherlands conducted by Markantoni and Strijker (forthcoming). By comparing farmers' and non-farmers' side activities, that pilot found that most side activities in rural areas outside built-up areas (71%) were developed by non-farmer rural inhabitants rather than farmers. The same study also found that side activities – both by farmers and by non-farmers – could contribute to the development of rural communities not so much economically, but more at individual and social levels. Furthermore, this pilot suggested that non-farmers' side activities in particular may have a more important role in stimulating new activities in rural areas and diversifying rural economic activities than had previously been considered. Seeing the potential in these early results made it even more important to study in detail side activities by non-farmers and what their broader implications for rural development are.

1.4.3 Rural side activities

In principle, side activities can be found anywhere, urban or rural. This study focuses on rural areas outside built-up areas (see also Chapter 2 for details). Side activities can also be found in villages and in urban locations, but in those cases the availability of natural amenities and resources differ (e.g. land/space, quiet, green space, and the proximity and density of clients). The availability of these resources in particular could create different opportunities for

[17] We refer here to people who do not earn their main income in the agricultural sector.

starting up a side activity. For example, starting a mini-campsite or a tea garden requires the availability of land as much as a quiet and green space, amenities which in urban locations are scarcer than in rural areas.

Taking into consideration the above two elements, non-farmers and rural areas, the focus of this dissertation is on a specific type of a side activity:

> The side activity as we analyze it here is *a home-based activity, which provides a supplementary income at the household level and is carried out in rural households by non-farmers.*[18]

1.5 Aim of the study and research questions

The impact of side activities is studied at two levels. The first is associated with the role of side activities at the *personal level* – that is, the owner, the household and the side activity (i.e. rural lifestyle, personal enrichment, family considerations, see Section 1.2) – and the second is associated with the activities' potential impact at the *regional level* (i.e. socioeconomic rural development and physical environment, see Section 1.3). Both levels of analysis are necessary to understand the role and the impact of side activities. These two levels are related. To say something about the relevance of side activities at the regional level, we have to study side activities at the personal level first. Therefore, the research objectives of this dissertation are summarized as:

> *a. To identify the importance of side activities at the personal level (i.e. owner, household, side activity) and*
> *b. To identify the role that side activities play in the development of rural areas*

Based on these two levels, (a) the personal level and (b) the regional level, the research questions of this dissertation are developed accordingly. At the personal level, we will first gain insight into the start-up motives – the factors that played a role in the decision to start a side activity – and we will also gain an insight into their growth potential. Contributing to this understanding, we will provide more knowledge about the personal aspirations of these owners considering gender roles, life transitions and household circumstances. Then, at the regional level, we will examine the broader implications of side activities for the social and economic development of rural communities and also on their role in shaping the landscape. All these will be examined in a specific geographical context, the Netherlands (see Chapter 2

[18] This definition varies slightly in the different chapters because it developed gradually throughout the research process.

for the methodology and data collection). Below, the reasons why these topics were chosen are described in detail.

a. The personal level

First, at the personal level, this study will provide greater understanding about the motives and personal aspirations of side activity owners. A focus on motives will reveal not only the intentions of people (economic and non-economic) but also the degree of importance of these activities for their everyday lives, needs, desires and lifestyles. Are their practitioners mainly interested in earning extra income or are they in search of a rural lifestyle? As a starting point for this dissertation, we will first explore the motives of side activity owners theoretically and from an entrepreneurial point of view. More specifically, we will compare the expected motives of side activity entrepreneurs with two types of entrepreneurs, the classical and the lifestyle entrepreneur. The first theoretical research question is:

1. To what extent are side activity entrepreneurs driven by lifestyle or economic rewards?

After gaining a theoretical background on the potential motives of side activity entrepreneurs, we examine in greater detail the actual motives and aspirations of people who initiate a side activity. In doing so, we will show to what extent side activities are an important part of the lives of the individuals and what modern lifestyles they represent. Understanding the rationale behind them is important for ascertaining the specific goals and needs of this group. As such, compared to small businesses and the secondary activities of farmers, we will examine in detail the main motives for non-farmers for starting side activities. Following a personal level analysis, we will answer the following research question:

2. What are the main motives of non-farmers when starting a side activity?

To gain a deeper understanding of the impact and the role of side activities for the individual, we will examine more in-depth, enabling and initiating factors and satisfaction resulting from operating side activities in a specific geographical context in the northeast of the Netherlands: the Veenkoloniën, a rural area in decline. We further explore the organizational and emotional struggles related to conducting these activities within the household space. This part of the dissertation contextualizes side activities to a specific context and also examines whether side activities are tied to a specific region and whether this region enables or disables people from starting side activities. We will thus answer the following research question:

3. Which factors enable the initiation of non-farmers' side activities, considering family, household, and individual considerations, as well as location characteristics?

Note that this question, like the previous one (Research Question 2), is phrased from the point of view of the individual. The questions therefore add to the understanding of the impact and role of side activities for the individual.

Alongside motives, enabling factors and decision-making processes for starting a side activity, we will further focus on a different aspect of side activities – the growth expectations of their owners. Examining growth expectations will reveal whether side activities have longer term perspectives. Will these activities soon be abandoned, remain stable or transform into main activities? The continuation and growth of side activities could have an impact on the future economic development of rural areas. The latter is applicable in particular to the activities which are going to expand by using more land and/or space, or by moving beyond the direct vicinity of the home. If this is the case, then another question arises. Do side activities have an influence on the physical environment and do they keep its visual rural qualities intact? To answer these questions, our focus is therefore on the growth expectations and factors influencing growth. The research questions are as follows:

4. What are the growth expectations of side activity owners?
5. Which factors influence the growth expectations of side activities?

Although these two last questions are still examined at the personal level, they can also reveal the broader implications of side activities on rural development, especially if some of these activities are going to transform into a main source of income activity. They are therefore considered as transition or intermediate questions from the individual to the regional level of analysis of this study.

b. The regional level

As mentioned earlier (see Sections 1.2 and 1.3), side activities are expected to have a certain value, not only for the individual but also for the social and economic development and the physical environment of rural areas. In order thus to understand their potential and limitations for the development of rural communities, we will answer the following question:

6. What is the impact of side activities on the economic, social and physical environment aspects of rural development?

The answer to this research question will add to our understanding of the impact of side activities on rural communities. In doing so, we will examine three main aspects of rural development, namely, economic, social capital and physical environment, contributing in that way to a more holistic understanding of their broader and regional impact.

1.6 Outline of the study

This study consists of a collection of articles and is divided into eight chapters. The schematic presentation of this dissertation is illustrated in Figure 1. Chapter 2 describes the methodology and the data collection process of this dissertation. The data collection comprised three phases. In the first phase, we conducted a pilot study aimed to gather initial information and to form the basis for the next phases. In the second (main) phase, the aim was to gain basic information about side activities through a survey of 36 Dutch municipalities. The third phase aimed to obtain a deeper understanding by means of in-depth interviews in a particular socioeconomic geographical context, the Veenkoloniën.

Chapter 3 explores side activities from an entrepreneurial point of view (classic and lifestyle entrepreneurs) and addresses Research Question 1. Here we have to emphasize that Chapter 3 was written before we collected our data, intending to explore previous research on entrepreneurship and indicate where side activity entrepreneurs could fit based on start-up motives. At that point of the research process, we did not consider the small business literature and previous research on farmers' side activities. This theoretical gap was covered after the data collection process in Chapters 4, 5 and 6.

Chapters 4, 5 and 6 follow a personal level analysis, examining side activities at the level of the individual side activity owner. Chapter 4 deals with the start-up motives of the individuals and answers Research Question 2. The analysis in this chapter is based on data gathered by means of a survey. This method of data collection was necessary, as previous data on side activities were not available (see Chapter 2). Chapter 5 follows a qualitative approach by means of in-depth interviews to gain a deeper understanding of the role of side activities in the everyday lives of the individuals, taking a gender perspective, and answers Research Question 3.

Chapter 6 addresses Research Questions 4 and 5, concerning the growth expectations of side activities. Based on theoretical perspectives and empirical data on small business growth literature, the chapter shows the future potential of side activities and the factors that influence the growth expectations of side activities. Further, it develops models to predict side activity growth expectations, using our own dataset on side activities (see Chapter 2). Chapter 7 contributes to a collective evaluation of the impact of side activities on rural development, adopting a regional level approach and answering Research Question 6. To answer this research question, we brought together different datasets from the various steps of data collection process (both qualitative and quantitative). Finally, Chapter 8 summarizes and discusses the results, considering rural policy recommendations and future directions.

Figure 1. Schematic presentation of the dissertation

	Chapter 1 Introduction
	Chapter 2 Methodology and data collection
Personal level	**Chapter 3** Side activity entrepreneur: Lifestyle or economically oriented? Research Question 1 *To what extent are side activity entrepreneurs driven by lifestyle or economic rewards?*
	Chapter 4 Non-farmers motives for starting-up a side activity Research Question 2 *What are the main motives of non-farmers when starting a side activity?*
	Chapter 5 Bringing the 'invisible' side activities to light Research Question 3 *Which factors enable the initiation of non-farmers' side activities, considering family, household and individual considerations, as well as location characteristics?*
	Chapter 6 Growth expectations for side activities Research Question 4 *What are the growth expectations of side activity owners?* Research Question 5 *Which factors influence the growth expectations of side activities?*
Regional level	**Chapter 7** Contributing to a vibrant countryside? Research Question 6 *What is the impact of side activities on the economic, social and physical environment aspects of rural development?*
	Chapter 8 Conclusions

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2 Methodology and data collection

2 Methodology and data collection

2.1 Introduction

The goal of this study is to gain insight into the side activities of non-farmers in rural areas in the Netherlands. Side activities were difficult to examine as information and secondary data were lacking. The reason for this lack of information is mainly the fact that side activities are literally invisible in the official records and databases of professional organizations. In the Netherlands, although many side activities are officially registered with the Chamber of Commerce under the business category, they cannot be identified as side activities.[1]

Finding side activities was therefore one of the main tasks and challenges of this study. In this chapter we describe how side activities were spotted and how the study was conducted. This study was divided into three main phases. Below, these phases are first discussed and then the methods adopted are presented.

2.2 Three phases

As side activities are difficult to identify, this study adopted a step-by-step method to assess the feasibility of the study. The fieldwork was divided into three main phases, facilitating the data collection process. In the *first phase* a pilot study was conducted to gather initial information about side activities and to test whether we were able to find enough side activities. This formed the basis for the second phase of this study (see Section 2.5 for data collection and also Markantoni & Strijker forthcoming, for the results of the pilot study). In the *second phase* the aim was to gather basic information about the side activities and their owners in representative municipalities in the Netherlands by means of a survey. This comprises the main fieldwork of this dissertation (see Section 2.7 for data collection and Chapters 4, 5 and 7 for the results). Finally, the *third phase* aims to enrich the information gathered from the previous phases with in-depth interviews in which more difficult and sensitive issues around the culture in side activities, the family and gender roles were investigated (see Chapter 6). Below, these phases are described in detail.

[1] The Chamber of Commerce does not offer the option to register as a side activity but officially only as a business.

2.2.1 The first phase: the pilot study

In order to examine the magnitude and type of side activities, a pilot study was conducted in 2007 prior to the main fieldwork.[2] The pilot study provided us with initial information about side activities, how many, what type of activities we could expect, start-up motives, growth expectations and general information about the respondents and their potential role in rural development. This pilot also formed the basis for the questions that were included in the main survey used in this dissertation. Although the paper based on this pilot study (see Markantoni & Strijker forthcoming) is not included in this dissertation, we include the methods followed during that process. We do so because the pilot study was the foundation for the main fieldwork of this dissertation. For details about the pilot study, see Section 2.5.

2.2.2 The second and main phase: the survey

The second and main phase of this study was conducted in 2009 and aimed to examine side activities in greater detail by developing an archive with basic information about side activities and their basic characteristics, and the start-up motives, location choice, growth expectations and background information about the respondents. Quantitative methods such as a survey best fit this goal. As Vidich and Shapiro (1955) note, without survey data, an observer can only make reasonable guesses about his area of ignorance. The quantitative method used in this dissertation is thus the survey. This method assisted us in producing a data set of side activities in different rural areas in the Netherlands and in gathering data in a relatively short period. The choice between qualitative or quantitative methods also relates to the nature of the research questions (Punch 2005). For this study, Research Questions 2, 4 and 5 seek to make comparisons, descriptions and reveal hidden patterns, while Question 3 considers more sensitive issues around the culture of side activities, family situations and gender differentiations.

There are many ways to conduct a survey, including telephone, mail surveys, personal at-home surveys, computer-assisted interviewing and internet-based surveying (Couper & Hansen 2001; Maan & Stewart 2001; Singleton & Straits 2001). Although the developments in computer-based surveying have made such surveys easier to conduct, for this study we used at-home surveys and more specific face-to-face interviews. As hardly anything was known from other sources than our own pilot study about side activities, by conducting face-to-face interviews, we wanted not only to have interaction and personal contact with the respondents but also to gain a deeper understanding of the phenomenon of side activities.

[2] The research was conducted by two groups of research assistants. Each of the two groups consisted of four students. The students conducted this research as part of their Bachelor's theses at the University of Groningen (2007).

Finally, another advantage of conducting face-to-face survey interviews is that these can generate higher response rates than other survey techniques (Singleton & Straits 2001).

For this phase of the study we used a detailed survey covering a variety of topics related to the owner, the side activity, government involvement, location choice and the perceived impacts of side activities on different aspects of rural development. For the complete survey see Appendix 1.

2.2.3 The third phase: the in-depth interviews

The aim of the third phase was to gain a deeper understanding of side activities by enriching the data from the previous phases through a qualitative approach. In this phase of the study, we selected one rural region in the northeast of the Netherlands, the Veenkoloniën (see Section 2.4.4 for selection choice). In order to collect data, in-depth interviews were held in 2010 with seventeen respondents who own and run side activities in the Veenkoloniën. This method assisted us in understanding a particular part of the respondents' lives in greater depth (Liamputtong & Ezzy 2006; Strauss et al. 2000). The main themes discussed during the interviews were: the original idea for starting up, the decision-making process, the lifecycle of the side activity, unexpected problems and pleasant experiences, and future wishes (see also Appendix 2 for the in-depth interviews guide). More details about the data collection during the third phase can be found in Chapter 5.

2.3 The study area

The study area of this dissertation is the Netherlands. A specific characteristic of the Netherlands is that its countryside is relatively urbanized with few remaining rural areas relative to other countries in Europe (CBS 2009a; OECD 2010). This is also demonstrated by the OECD (2010) classification of three categories: Predominantly Urban, Intermediate and Predominantly Rural[3] – there are no predominantly rural regions in the Netherlands at the aggregate provincial level. A city can be reached within half an hour from almost anywhere in the Netherlands (OECD 2008), implying that access to rural areas is relatively easy (e.g. commuting or visiting the countryside). People can easily visit rural areas, and as a consequence of this there is a large demand for tourist and recreational activities. Some of these activities are also related to side activities. Additionally, the relatively easy access to rural areas has enabled rural inhabitants to live in rural areas and to commute, and this creates opportunities for the development of rural side activities (e.g. more visitors and potential

[3] Predominantly urban, if the proportion of population living in rural local units is below 15%; Intermediate, if the proportion of population living in rural local units is between 15% and 50%; Predominantly rural, if the proportion of population living in rural local units is higher than 50%.

customers in rural areas). Although the Netherlands is an urbanized country, there are regions which are considered rural. The North, for example, is considered to be the most rural part of the Netherlands based on address density and the perceptions of the Dutch population (Haartsen et al. 2003; Heins 2002).

Despite the fact that the Netherlands is a highly urbanized country, there are many rural areas in Europe comparable to the Dutch countryside. For example, the OECD urban-rural typology (2010) shows that intermediate rural regions in Belgium, Luxembourg, West Germany and in the UK are closely compatible to intermediate rural regions in the Netherlands based on population proportion (see Eurostat 2010 and OECD 2010). We would therefore expect the results of this study to be relevant and open to comparison to those countries.

Since this study is interested in rural side activities, we focus on rural areas beyond the villages, because areas outside the built-up areas around villages are less densely populated, which is the closest to rural areas we can find in the Netherlands.[4]

2.4 How and where to find side activities

As noted earlier, no information and secondary data were available on non-farmers' side activities. Therefore, they could not be identified without visual field research. Fortunately, because many side activities involve tourism, services and facilities, producing and selling products, they are often recognizable from the street from roadside signs. Accordingly, one method of finding them is by travelling through all the streets in the relevant rural areas using different modes of transport (e.g. car, bicycle, boat or local public transport, see Figure 1) and spotting the roadside signs. After finding them, the owners were asked whether their activity fits into the definition of side activities. The aim was to find all the side activities in the selected research areas. Although this study focuses on non-farmers' side activities, we also counted the side activities of farmers in the same municipalities[5] in order to compare them in number and type. Below we describe the sampling frame of this study, along with the selection criteria and the selection procedure.

[4] We also counted side activities within very small villages (<500 inhabitants).
[5] We only counted farmers' side activities in terms of number and type; we did not perform a survey or interviews.

Figure 1. Modes of transport during the fieldwork (by ferry-boat and by bike)

2.4.1 Sampling frame

In the Netherlands, there are different regional divisions in use: regional clusters of provinces (landsdelen (4), NUTS 1), provinces (12, NUTS 2), COROP regions (40, NUTS 3, CBS 1974), municipalities (498 in 2007, NUTS 5), and the smallest administrative units of measurement, the district-neighbourhoods (13,876) (see Eurostat 2006 and CBS 2010). For this study, *municipalities* were chosen as the sampling frame. The main arguments for this selection are: first, if we move to a higher level of regional division we sacrifice rurality (OECD 2008), and second, if we move to a lower level we lose information. At a lower scale level there is not much secondary and statistical data available, such as tourist and entrepreneurship rates, on which we could base our selection (see 2.4.3).

2.4.2 Excluding urban municipalities

As this research is focused on rural areas and examines rural side activities, we wanted to avoid the densely populated municipalities in the Netherlands. Therefore, we excluded the very urbanized municipalities.

To achieve this, we set out some sampling criteria. First we excluded the urbanized municipalities from the sampling frame. More specifically, the very highly urbanized municipalities (12 municipalities) and the highly urbanized municipalities (59 municipalities) were dropped from the sampling frame. Second, because we wanted to minimize the influence of these urban centers on the municipalities around them, ranges around them were also excluded. Municipalities that were within 15 km^2 of the 12 very highly urbanized municipalities and municipalities that were within 7.5 km^2 of the 59 highly urbanized municipalities were dropped from the sampling frame. Finally, we also excluded municipalities with more than 60,000 inhabitants, as we considered them to be urbanized

municipalities. Using these sampling criteria, 137 municipalities remained in the sample (see Figure 2).

Figure 2. Map of the 137 municipalities

2.4.3 Two selection criteria[6]

After defining the sampling frame (137 municipalities), a further division was made based on two criteria, touristic rates and start-up entrepreneurship rates. Because we wanted to compare different regions and examine where more side activities were to be found, we selected tourist areas and areas with different levels of entrepreneurship to be represented in the sampling frame. The final sample was defined on the basis of a combination of these two criteria.

First selection criterion – Tourist rates (high and low)

From the pilot study we knew that tourist areas could be attractive areas for starting a side activity. Therefore, a relationship between tourist areas and side activities was expected. More specifically, it was expected that in areas with high tourist rates, more tourist side activities would be found. The tourist areas in the Netherlands are classified into seventeen regions – this classification was planned in 1972 in the field of tourism for statistical reasons (CBS 2008). The intention was to select areas with high and low degrees of tourism. These regions are typified in terms of the number of overnight stays per inhabitant. A high number indicates a tourist area. Here we use a rather crude selection criterion by labelling regions above the average as highly touristic and regions below average as less touristic. In addition, we had to use this region-wide labelling for all the municipalities in a region. Appendix 3 shows the seventeen tourist areas of the Netherlands and their classification in terms of number of overnight stays per 1000 inhabitants.

Second selection criterion – Start-up entrepreneurship rates (high and low)

For this study, we expected that starting up a side activity is related to an entrepreneurial action. Therefore, it is expected that in areas with high start-up entrepreneurship rates, more side activities will be found. To examine whether there is a relationship between entrepreneurship and side activities, start-up rates were chosen as the second criterion for selecting municipalities. This criterion helped us to discover whether there are differences between areas with high and low start-up rates, and whether this criterion can be associated with the start-up of side activities. The start-up rates are measured in terms of new firms per 1000 inhabitants in 2006, data obtained from the Chamber of Commerce (*Kamer van Koophandel*) (2007). The low and high degree of start-up rates is defined as less than eight and more than eight new firms per 1000 inhabitants respectively.

Although these were the main criteria for the selection of the research areas for this study, these did not appear to be prominent in the results. Therefore, they are not further elaborated in this study.

[6] We will come back and discuss these criteria in Chapter 8 (Conclusions).

2.4.4 The selection procedure

Figure 3 illustrates the selection procedure based on the criteria discussed above step-by-step. In the first step, the 137 municipalities (sampling frame) are grouped into four clusters. These four clusters are a combination of tourist and entrepreneurship rates, high and low respectively (see Figure 3 and Table 1). From each of these groups, seven municipalities were randomly selected (selection 1). For this study we also conducted an additional selection based on a specific northeast region, namely the Veenkoloniën (selection 2). The reasons for this additional selection were, first, this area is known for many initiatives and efforts in the area of social, economic and spatial developments in Veenkoloniën. Second, since we wanted to enrich our data, choosing this area was practical in being near our research institute. With this purposive selection, we wanted to examine whether there were side activities in this area and whether this area functions as an enabling region for side activities (see Chapter 5). As this is a deliberate selection, the municipalities from the Veenkoloniën represent two of the four clusters (high start-up/high tourism, low start-up/low tourism) and were not randomly selected (see Figure 3). With this secondary selection, the northeast region is overrepresented in our database. The additional selection brought into the database municipalities that fall into the urbanized category (which was previously excluded). The Veenkoloniën region has a ribbon development structure. This specific pattern results in some large rural areas and other relatively densely populated areas. Therefore, large parts of this region are very rural despite being classified as urban, permitting us to decide to include them in the database. A total of 36 municipalities were chosen for the fieldwork for this study (see Figure 4).

Figure 3. Schematic representation of the selection procedure

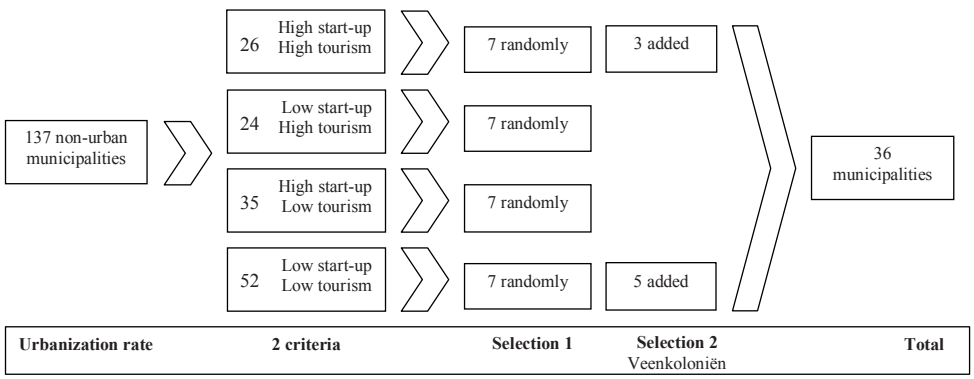


Table 1. The 36 municipalities selected (alphabetically within the groups)

Combination Tourism/Start-up	Municipality	Start-up Rates	Touristic Rates	Touristic areas*
High start-up rates High touristic rates	Aa en Hunze	8.43	10.07	Groningen/Friesland/Drenthe sandy-soil areas
	Bellingwedde	8.43	10.07	Groningen/Friesland/Drenthe sandy-soil areas
	Borger-odoorn	9.64	10.07	Groningen/Friesland/Drenthe sandy-soil areas
	Coevorden	8.35	10.07	Groningen/Friesland/Drenthe sandy-soil areas
	Emmen	8.18	10.07	Groningen/Friesland/Drenthe sandy-soil areas
	Nederweert	10.13	6.50	East Brabant/N. & Central Limburg/Nijmegen
	Oldebroek	8.72	8.60	Veluwe and Veluwerand
	Sluis	9.15	21.66	North Sea seaside resorts
	Vlagtwedde	8.83	10.07	Groningen/Friesland/Drenthe sandy-soil areas
	Zijpe	8.74	21.66	North Sea seaside resorts
Low start-up rates High touristic rates	Gulpen-Wittem	6.74	7.02	South Limburg
	Heerenveen	7.67	10.07	Groningen/Friesland/Drenthe sandy-soil areas
	Meppel	7.30	10.07	Groningen/Friesland/Drenthe sandy-soil areas
	Opsterland	7.29	10.07	Groningen/Friesland/Drenthe sandy-soil areas
	Sint Anthonis	7.60	6.50	East Brabant/N. & Central Limburg/Nijmegen
	Texel	6.07	220.17	Wadden Islands
	Venray	6.84	6.50	East Brabant/N. & Central Limburg/Nijmegen
High start-up rates Low touristic rates	Buren	10.46	1.46	Gelderland river region
	Niedorp	10.60	1.71	Rest of the Netherlands
	Oostflakkee	8.42	3.54	Delta area
	Tholen	9.81	3.54	Delta area
	Tubbergen	8.08	4.83	Twente, Salland & Vecht regions
	Valkenswaard	8.76	4.23	West & Central Brabant
	West Maas en Waal	10.06	1.46	Gelderland river region
Low start-up rates Low touristic rates	Bronckhorst	6.71	3.90	Achterhoek
	Dongeradeel	5.78	1.71	Rest of the Netherlands
	Franekeradeel	7.70	1.71	Rest of the Netherlands
	Gaasterlân-Sleat	4.54	3.93	Friesland lake district
	Hellendoorn	6.57	4.83	Twente, Salland & Vecht regions
	Hof van Twente	7.34	4.83	Twente, Salland & Vecht regions
	Hoogezand-Sappemeer	5.97	3.93	Friesland lake district
	Menterwolde	7.69	1.71	Rest of the Netherlands
	Pekela	5.65	1.71	Rest of the Netherlands
	Stadskanaal	7.05	1.71	Rest of the Netherlands
	Veendam	6.43	1.71	Rest of the Netherlands
	Winterswijk	5.99	3.90	Achterhoek

*The Dutch names of the touristic areas are provided in Appendix 3

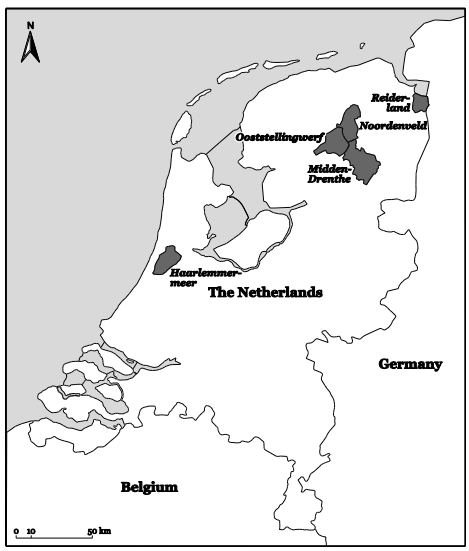
Figure 4. Map of the 36 municipalities selected

2.5 The first phase: the pilot study

Location selection

Before the main phase of this study, we conducted a pilot study where the location selection was not based on the selection of the 36 municipalities mentioned previously (see Section 2.4). Five different types of municipalities were selected for this pilot. The purpose of this selection was to cover a variety of rural areas in the Netherlands and to examine where more side activities could be found – in rural, urban or touristic municipalities. (Figure 5).

Figure 5. Map of the municipalities for the pilot study



First, the municipality of Reiderland was chosen because it is one of the most remote areas in the Netherlands, and the municipality of Haarlemmermeer because it is near the urban centre of the country. Although we wanted to stay away from cities, Haarlemmermeer was chosen to test whether we were able to find side activities there. Midden-Drenthe was then selected as a tourist municipality, and finally the municipalities Noordenveld and Ooststellingwerf because they seemed to be more or less average rural municipalities. Table 2 shows that more side activities were found in the tourist and rural municipalities than in the remote municipality or the municipality near a big urban centre. This revealed where more side activities would be expected for the main fieldwork.

Table 2. Number of side activities per municipality (pilot study 2007)

Municipality	**Surface** (km^2)	**Side activities**
Remote	156.72	10
Urban	185.28	9
Touristic	345.82	39
Average rural	205.36	15
Average rural	226.08	28

Finding side activities

As mentioned earlier, we had to spot side activities visually. The pilot study was necessary to test whether the visual method was effective. The results showed that this method was not always enough, as some activities did not have roadside signs. Therefore, we decided to use the extra method of snowballing to spot non-visible activities in the main study.

The survey

During the pilot study a survey was used to collect data on side activities. The survey was short, with questions related to motivations, future perspectives and general questions about the side activities and background information of the respondents. This method proved to be efficient for collecting basic information in a short period. Moreover, the high response rate (74%) showed that the respondents were willing to cooperate in completing the survey. This high response rate could also be due to the face-to-face interviews, which minimized non-contacts and refusals.

2.6 Data gathering process for the main fieldwork

Since the survey proved to be efficient for collecting data for this study (tested in the pilot study), the next step was to plan the main fieldwork (second phase). One of the main concerns during the data gathering process was to ensure the quality of the data. Throughout all the fieldwork steps, we controlled for errors and inaccuracies and continuously monitored the research assistants to obtain high quality data. In the following sections, the planning procedure is analyzed step-by-step.

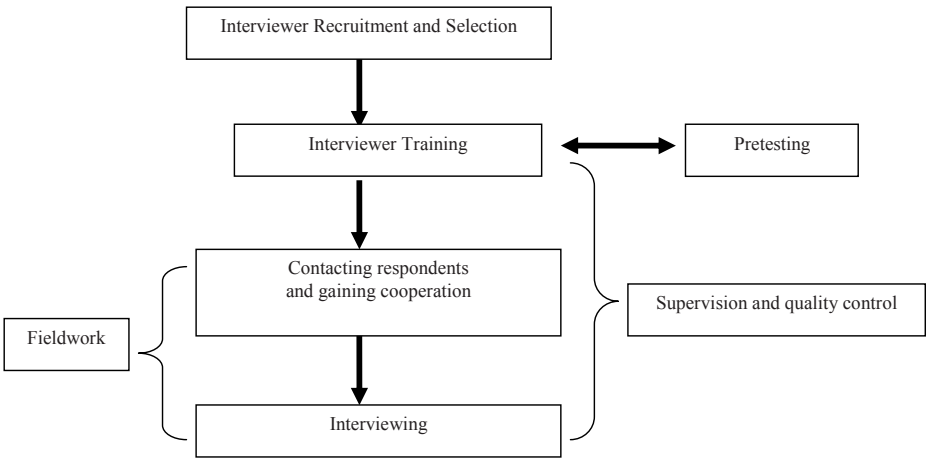
2.6.1 Interviewer recruitment and selection

As the 36 selected municipalities cover about 14 percent of the total surface area of the Netherlands (5819/41543km^2, CBS 2007), research assistants/interviewers were required to help carry out the fieldwork. We were aware that the selection of interviewers was crucial for the quality of the data, and as Singleton and Straits (2001) argue, interviewer selection can

affect the quality of the survey and influence the respondents' answers. Below, we describe how the research assistants were recruited.

In the third year of a Bachelor's programme at the Hanze University of Applied Sciences in Groningen and at the Real Estate Department, students follow a course on how to do research. In this course, they conduct research in a real-life situation. The research project is initiated by a client (in this case, the author of this dissertation). The fieldwork planning steps are illustrated in Figure 6. Referring to the quality of the research and the possible errors made by students, Sudman and Bradburn (1974), mention an analysis of hundreds of studies that showed that interviewers/research assistants under the age of 25 (most of them college students) made more errors than other research assistants. This is possibly because of inexperience and lack of efficient training (Bradburn 1983). In this research, we were aware of that factor. However, through training and constant supervision during the project, we tried to minimize errors and inaccuracies by the students.

Figure 6. Steps in survey interviewing (adapted from Singleton & Straits 2001)



2.6.2 Number of research assistants

As mentioned earlier, in order to conduct the research effectively and within the time frame, a large number of research assistants (students) were needed. It was decided that five students per municipality could cover the research area. The research was conducted by nine groups of students. Each group consisted of five students and one instructor (45 students in total). In this project, the instructor had a steering role to ensure the high quality of the research. Moreover, in the first two weeks of the course the students had several conversations with the client (the author of this dissertation) concerning practical problems, the research objectives and the

expectations of the research. Afterwards, the client kept the students updated, prepared the research plan collaboratively and prepared the survey.

2.6.3 Interviewer Training

Because the students did not have prior experience of fieldwork, it was necessary to organize an extensive interview training for this research. Two classroom sessions were prepared. During the first session, a short presentation of the importance of conducting a good quality survey was given, followed by a presentation of the main elements of the survey and instruction in basic interviewing skills. In the second session, an example interview was demonstrated and the students were divided into pairs. Each student practised the survey twice. Students were given role-plays and they had to imagine themselves in a fieldwork situation. Furthermore, they were shown possible ways of asking difficult and follow-up questions to elicit the right answers from the respondents. Moreover, the students were directed to practice the survey with other students outside this project and with their family and friends (home study). The reason why special attention was paid to training was to prepare students for any situation that they might face during the interviews and to make them familiar with the survey. Moreover, being prepared for the fieldwork also raises the quality of the data during the interviews.

2.6.4 Pretesting

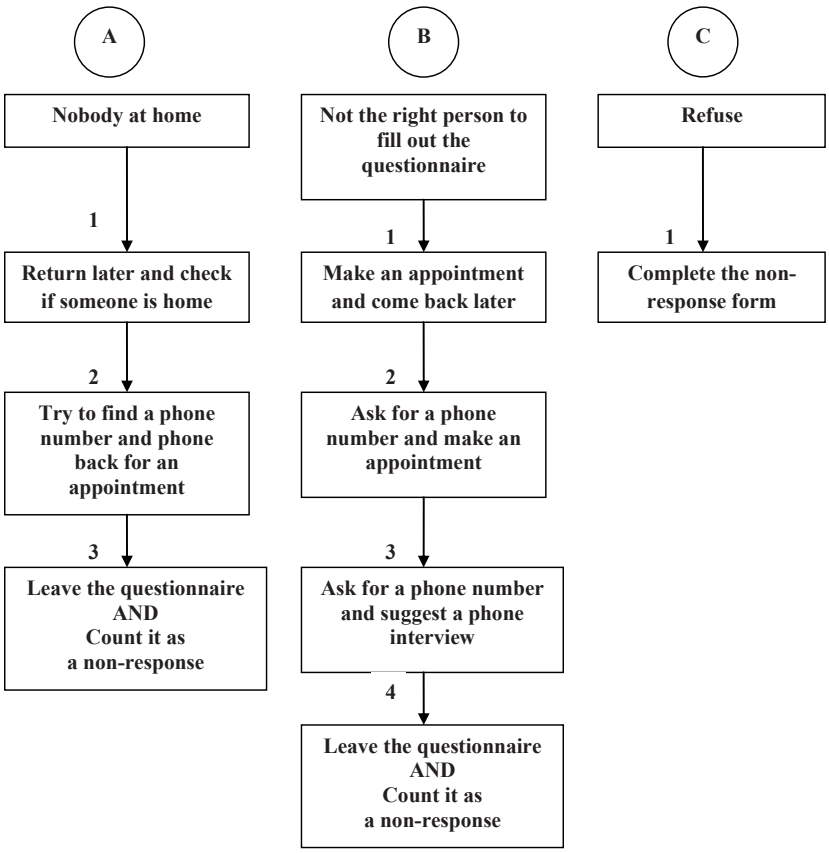
Pretesting the survey is crucial before commencing fieldwork. This can reveal unexpected problems and helps finalize the survey design. Issues that we had to consider were: 1) question design and format, 2) questionnaire length 3) questionnaire output, 4) classification questions, 5) serialization and 6) interviewing (Flowerdew & Martin 2005). The project instructors and the students themselves pretested and evaluated the survey as a whole. We asked specifically for feedback on the survey design and its content. The pretest and the pilot study (see 2.5) helped us reveal unexpected problems with question phrasing, instructions to skip questions or include new questions. Based on this test and the comments we received, we adapted some questions and some answer categories that were not clearly formulated initially.

2.6.5 Contacting respondents and gaining cooperation

In order to find respondents and have personal contact with them, the students were provided with alternative ways of reaching them (see Figure 8). The importance of having personal contact was emphasized, as this raised the response rates. Leaving a survey behind to be sent by post was their last alternative. See Figure 7, where students are pictured waiting for a response.

Figure 7. Students waiting for a response

Figure 8. Alternative ways to find a respondent



2.6.6 Checklist

For this study, we had to find side activities that fit our definition. Therefore, students went through a checklist to ensure that the activity fell into the target group:

1 The side activity is taking place at the spot (rural household)
2 The side activity provides a side income
3 The respondent is a non-farmer
4 When the respondent was a farmer, we only counted the number and type(s) of side activity.

When the respondent was found, the interviewers were instructed to introduce themselves, explain the purpose of the visit, present an identification card and a cover letter explaining the purpose of the research and, finally, ask for the respondents' cooperation. Singleton and Straits (2001) emphasize the importance of persuading people to cooperate in completing a survey. Furthermore, they argue that this minimizes the non-contacts and refusals. Avoiding refusals is complex and may have various causes, some lying in the social environment and the demographic characteristics of the respondents (Schwarz et al. 1998). Other causes of refusals may have to do with the personal characteristics of the interviewer or the interviewer-respondent interaction (Singleton & Straits 2001). Especially because this research used the face-to-face interview method, the personal contact was weighted as the most important encounter. Groves and Couper's (1996) theory of survey participation emphasizes that the decision to cooperate or refuse is shaped in large part by the interactions between the householders and the interviewers, which applies mainly to face-to-face interviews.

Furthermore, Goyder (1987) mentions that gaining cooperation and involving respondents in the survey is based on the social exchange theory of human behaviour. According to this theory, people will be more likely to cooperate if there is something to gain from this process. For this research, however, although the respondents were not promised monetary rewards, the social utility of the survey was emphasized. They were promised, nevertheless, that they would receive the final report of this study to demonstrate the importance of their input for the research.

2.6.7 Interviewing

Once trust had been gained from the respondents, the collection of the data commenced. In general, data collection tends to be the most labour-intensive aspect of a survey (Weinberg 1983). Singleton & Straits (2001) clarify that the goal now is to expose each respondent to the same interview experience. Although various practices and ways can be found in the literature, the interviewers were provided with the four main rules of survey interviewing

proposed by Flower and Mangion (1990). The interviewers were also directed during the training to practise the four elements:

1 Read the questions exactly as written
2 Use follow up probes and nondirective questions
3 Note answers without interpretation
4 A professional and neutral relationship with the respondents is required.

These rules are important for ensuring the quality of the data. The respondents' answers should be reliable and measure their opinion and their correct answers. The students should not manipulate the data by guessing the respondents' answers or by assuming what the respondents meant.

2.6.8 Supervision and quality control

The supervision of the research assistants involved three types of activities (Singleton & Straits 2001):

1 *Managing the work of the interviewers.* The tasks during this process included: a) the preparation of all the materials for the fieldwork (surveys, letters, envelopes); b) regular meetings each week to review the students' work and give feedback; and c) solving upcoming problems and answering the questions that arose.
2 *Monitoring the performance of the interviewers.* During the fieldwork, some of the students were accompanied by the client (me) to the interviews. Direct field observation provided useful information on how students were able to find side activities and conduct the interviews, including what happens from the initial contact with the respondents until the end of the interview (Singleton & Straits 2001). Accompanying students not only enhanced our knowledge of their performance but also was an extra motivation for them to do the interviews well. The students specifically mentioned during the weekly meetings that when the client was with them in the fieldwork, this kept them focused and at the same time encouraged them to continue the good research.
3 *Administering quality controls.* Observing the interviewers during the fieldwork was one way to monitor the quality of the research. Another way was during the weekly meetings. After every week of fieldwork, the students presented their results in detail and the main problems and difficulties experienced. This permitted the author to monitor them by asking detailed questions about their interviews. Finally, another form of quality control was the training sessions. Weinberg (1983) mentions that supervision cannot replace training; nevertheless, it may assist the precision and the accuracy of the research.

2.6.9 Problems before and during the fieldwork

Time of interviewing

The choice of the exact time of day for face-to-face interviewing can bias the data collection. Particularly when the research population consists of people who are likely to be at work during the day, it is possible that they will be omitted from the database. This was controlled by deciding upon a balanced timetable of interviewing shifts (Flowerdew & Martin 2005). For this research, we provided students with alternative ways to reach the respondents (Figure 8). Even if no one was at home during the visiting time, students were instructed to find the respondents via telephone, or visiting the house at another time of the day before leaving the survey behind and counting the case as a non-response.

Definition of a side activity

During the fieldwork, it was not always clear to the respondents what we meant by a side activity (*nevenactiviteit* in Dutch). We want to emphasize here that the term side activity was coined by us (researchers), not by the respondents. Some respondents refered to their activities as their extended hobby and their own small business, rather than a side activity. Some even expressed that the term 'side' had a negative connotation. We had to explain what our definition of a 'side activity' was. If our definition fitted with a respondent's activity, we proceeded to conduct the interviews.

2.7 Ethical considerations

The ethical challenges of this study were carefully taken into consideration. As some side activities are not officially registered, during the research process we strove to avoid any harm or putting the respondents and their side activities at any financial risk. According to Hennink et al. (2011), five main ethics principles should be considered when conducting research: informed consent, self-determination, minimization of harm, anonymity and confidentiality. For this study, as noted earlier, we conducted face-to-face interviews (by means of a survey) as well as in-depth interviews at a later stage. Prior to this study's main fieldwork (see Section 2.6), we sent out press releases to the local newspapers of the 36 municipalities to announce that in the coming weeks we were going to visit these areas and research side activities. Inhabitants were thereby able to be aware of the study.

After the press release, the first issues that we had to take into account were seeking permission and providing adequate information about the research project so that participants were able to consider whether they were willing voluntarily to participate in the study. This was an essential step, especially because in order to find participants to complete the survey we went from door to door. During the fieldwork, we introduced ourselves, showed an

identification card and a covering letter explaining in detail the purpose of this study. We also informed the participants of how the data would be used and about the outcomes of this study (i.e. PhD thesis, journal articles). We explicitly emphasized that we did not represent the tax authorities, as many participants were cautious about that.[7] After performing these steps, the respondents were allowed to choose whether to participate in the research.

Furthermore, because we wanted to learn about the people's opinions and perceptions, that is to hear their voices, we also had to consider carefully the principle of doing no harm to our participants by keeping the information and data secure (Hennink et al. 2011). It was thus specifically emphasized that all information gathered would be kept confidential and that the results of this study would be used only for scientific purposes and not be given to third parties. Finally, the identity of the participants was kept anonymous and only when we were given permission were some photos used for this study (i.e. in the dissertation, journal articles and presentations).

We had to record and transcribe the interviews, especially during the third stage of this study, in which we conducted in-depth interviews. Therefore, we had to explain why we were recording the interview and who would read the transcript, and then we asked for permission to record the session. Participants were also given the right to refuse to allow the interview to be recorded if they felt uncomfortable, that we were intruding on private information or talking about a sensitive topic (Flowerdew & Martin 2005).

2.8 Evaluating quality

As noted earlier, the selection and the training of the interviewers is crucial for the quality of the data. Through the training and the supervision control, the students were monitored and problems that arose during the fieldwork were minimized. Nevertheless, difficulties and inaccuracies when gathering data are unavoidable.

We examined to the response rates per group of students (Table 3) to measure possible differences in the students' performance. We observed that the rates per group ranged from 44% to 75%. This implies that there were indeed some differences per group in terms of how many respondents they were able to find and to interview. There are several reasons for this. First, it could imply that some groups were not motivated enough to find respondents. Moreover, the differences between groups could also depend on the way the students contacted the respondents and whether they indeed tried to interview them. As mentioned earlier, it is important to have personal contact with the respondents in order to gather data

[7] Some side activities were not officially registered with the Chamber of Commerce or with a professional organization so seeking permission was a crucial step for this study.

and have high response rates. However, some groups of students left many surveys in the household mailboxes without trying to make personal contact. Therefore, this could have affected the response rates, as many of these surveys were not sent back to us. However, the differences in the response rates were not only due to the way students conducted the fieldwork, as the respondents themselves also affected the study. This implies that some of the respondents did not want to cooperate. Furthermore, Table 3 also indicates the number of municipalities per group.

In this study we were aware of the above factors, which may have influenced the quality of the data. Nevertheless, during the research process, the students were supervised and monitored efficiently, assuring the quality and reliability of the data. We have to mention that although the aim of this study was to find all the side activities in all 36 municipalities, this was not always possible due to the invisibility of some activities. However, during the data collection there were no signs of structural bias.

Table 3. Response rates and number of municipalities per group

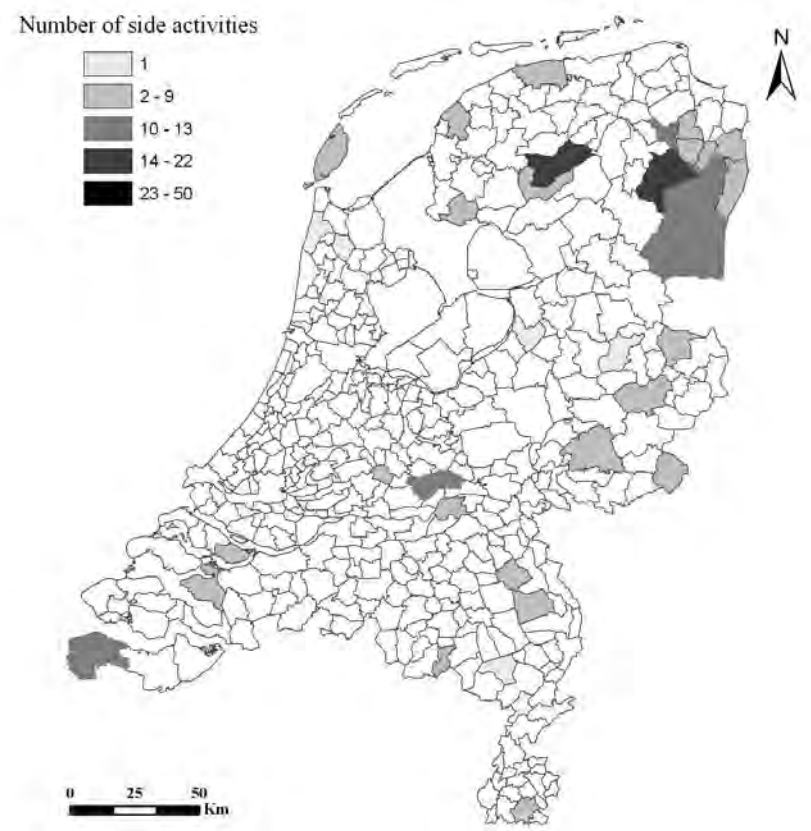
Number of student group	Response rate (%)	Number of municipalities
1	47	5
2	44	3
3	49	5
4	55	5
5	44	6
6	75	3
7	65	4
8	67	2 + 2 (pilot)
9	57	3

2.9 Side activities per municipality

The main fieldwork (second phase of the study) yielded 506 side activities in total. Of these, responses yielded 260 cases, and there were the 246 non-responses. Figure 9 illustrates the total number of side activities per municipality and Table 4 shows in detail the number of cases and the response rates per municipality. In total, the average response rate was 51%.

A first look at Figure 9 shows an uneven distribution of the number of side activities. What is important to note is that Figure 9 illustrates that in the northeast region, the response rates are relatively high compared with the other research areas. An explanation is that these municipalities were close to our research institute and the research assistants were possibly better able to visit these areas than municipalities further away. Table 4 shows all the study's cases in detail. Chapters 4, 5 and 7 of this dissertation are based on the results of this main fieldwork.[8]

Figure 9. Map of total number of side activities per municipality (2009)



[8]We will discuss these criteria further in Chapter 8 (Conclusions).

Table 4. Number of side activities per municipality (alphabetically) (2009)

Municipality	Cases	Non-response	Total	Response rates (%)
Aa en Hunze	20	27	47	43
Bellingwedde	9	6	15	60
Borger-Odoorn	11	5	16	69
Bronckhorst	7	6	13	54
Buren	11	13	24	46
Coevorden	13	9	22	59
Dongeradeel	6	9	15	40
Emmen	12	7	19	63
Franekeradeel	8	6	14	57
Gaasterlân-Sleat	4	7	11	36
Gulpen-Wittem	5	2	7	71
Heerenveen	4	4	8	50
Hellendoorn	1	6	7	14
Hof van Twente	5	27	32	16
Hoogezand-Sappemeer	11	5	16	69
Menterwolde	9	3	12	75
Meppel	6	4	10	60
Nederweert	1	0	1	100
Niedorp	1	2	3	33
Oldebroek	1	0	1	100
Oostflakkee	2	7	9	22
Opsterland	22	10	32	69
Pekela	4	0	4	100
Sint Anthonis	8	4	12	67
Sluis	13	13	26	50
Stadskanaal	11	5	16	69
Texel	7	8	15	47
Tholen	5	5	10	50
Tubbergen	4	9	13	31
Valkenswaard	2	0	2	100
Veendam	4	13	17	24
Venray	6	3	9	67
Vlagtwedde	13	9	22	59
West Maas en Waal	5	7	12	42
Winterswijk	6	4	10	60
Zijpe	1	1	2	50
No address	2	0	2	100
Grand Total	260	246	506	

2.10 Categories of side activities

To illustrate the types of businesses found in this study, below we present some photographs of some these businesses. This is done for each of the four main types found during the fieldwork: (1) tourism and recreation, (2) sale of home-grown products, (3) services and facilities provision and (4) arts and crafts.[9] The above categorization is retained throughout this dissertation. Additionally, the four main categories are further subcategorized and illustrated (see Figures 10, 11, 12, 13 and Appendix 4 for further sub-categorization) giving an overview of what side activities look like.

(1) Tourism and recreation

- Accommodation/mini-campsite
- Restaurant
- Tea garden
- Care farm, children farm
- Small museum
- Recreation

Figure 10. Tourism and recreation category
Clockwise: Group accommodation, mini-campsite, care farm, canoe rental, tea garden

[9]The number of side activities per category can be found in Appendix 4

(2) Sale of home-grown products

- Fruit
- Vegetables
- Plants and flowers
- Wooden products
- Garden decorations

Figure 11. Sale of home-grown products
Clockwise: Potatoes, wooden shoes, violets, onions/eggs, various homemade products

(3) Services and facilities provision

- Beauty care
- Care Services
- Events organization
- Animal care/industry
- Rentals
- Small shops
- Administrative services

Figure 12. Services and facilities provision
Clockwise: Nail care, beauty salon, hairdresser, dog grooming salon, spiritual centre

(4) Arts and crafts

- Gallery
- Glass studio
- Souvenirs/ceramics
- Curiosa

Figure 13. Arts and crafts
Clockwise: Glass studio/gallery, souvenirs, gallery (paintings, ceramics), glass studio

2.11 Summary

This chapter presented the methodology followed to find and examine non-farmers' side activities in rural areas in the Netherlands. During the three phases of fieldwork (pilot, survey, in-depth interviews) we spotted 506 non-farmers' side activities. From these we collected detailed data on 260 side activities in the rural areas of 36 Dutch municipalities. In addition to non-farmers we also spotted 269 farmers' side activities, but we did not collect detailed information from these. Chapters 4, 5, 6 and 7 are based on the above rural area selection and data collection procedures. In the remaining chapters (except Chapter 3, which is theoretical), the methodology and data collection will only be briefly described as all the steps (including limitations, ethical issues, data quality and response rates) are described in detail here.

Acknowledgments

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Additional information

Alongside the main, the second and the third phases of data collection, two additional small research projects were performed to answer the sixth research question of this dissertation. The first project examined the impact of side activities on rural development in two Dutch municipalities (Menterwolde and Borger-Odoorn) from the point of view of local businesses and local residents. In the second project, a survey and in-depth interviews were conducted with policy officers from the 36 Dutch municipalities (from the main fieldwork) to obtain the opinion of the local authorities on the impact of side activities. More details about the data collection for that research question (Research question 6) are found in Chapter 7.

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3 Side activity entrepreneur: Lifestyle or economically oriented?

3 Side activity entrepreneur: Lifestyle or economically oriented?[1]

Real success is finding your lifework in the work that you love *(David McCullough)*.

Not everyone starts a business for the money. In fact, more people are turning to entrepreneurship to support the lifestyle that they have always dreamed of *(George Rodriguez)*.

Abstract

In many rural areas in Europe, new economic opportunities are emerging following the decline of traditional agricultural employment. Rural employment is no longer dominated by farming activities, but also by other new activities related to residential use, tourism, nature development, recreational sites or the service sector. In this paper, we focus on these new activities and especially on side activities, which provide a side income for the rural household. Most attention in both the scientific literature and policies has focused on activities initiated by farmers, and little attention has been paid to the initiation of side activities in rural areas by non-farmers. Based on this observation, we examine what these side activities are and, furthermore, look at the motivations that lead non-farmers to begin side activities in the countryside. We question whether these motivations are related to lifestyle or are economically oriented. More specifically, we focus on the extent to which the motivations of side activity entrepreneurs are similar to the motivations of two other types of entrepreneurs – the classical and the lifestyle entrepreneur. We propose a continuum along which we can expect the motivations of side activity entrepreneurs.

3.1 Introduction

Rural areas are increasingly becoming places of consumption rather than only places of agricultural production (Ilbery 1998). Although agriculture is the hub of the rural economy, rural employment is no longer dominated only by agricultural activities. Instead, many other activities have sprung up, such as those related to the service sector, tourism/leisure, landscape management, water management, industry and manufacturing (Strijker 2000; Van Depoele 2000). Van Depoele (2000) argues that the word 'rural is no longer synonymous with farming' and that non-agricultural employment is increasing in rural areas: farmers are

[1] This chapter is reprinted from: Markantoni, M., S. Koster and D. Strijker (forthcoming) Side activity entrepreneur: Lifestyle or economically oriented. In B. Johannsson, C. Karlsson and R.R. Stough, eds., *Agglomeration, clusters and entrepreneurship: Studies in regional economic development* (MA: Edward Elgar Publications).

increasingly becoming part-time farmers. In addition, the decreasing number of farms has contributed to the replacement of agricultural activities by new economic activities (Daalhuizen et al. 2003; North & Smallbone 1995; O'Connor et al. 2006). All these are composites of a larger economic change in rural areas away from agriculture and industrial production, and towards a more service-intensive economy.

According to Ilbery (1998), where agricultural employment in rural areas is in decline, new activities can be a substitute. In particular, tourism and environmental conservation are creating multiple development trajectories in rural areas (Murdoch & Marsden 1994). Furthermore, the countryside can offer new avenues for activities such as camp sites, nature development and recreational sites in rural areas, bed-and-breakfasts, or service firms in old farmhouses. In this paper, we focus on these new activities and, especially, on side activities which provide extra income for the rural household.

With regard to rural diversification studies, it is observed that the centre of attention has always been the farm household and the abilities of farmers to find new activities and employment in order to survive and to decrease their dependence on agricultural activities (Chaplin et al. 2004; Herslund 2007; Van Huylenbroeck et al. 2004). Many studies have been conducted on rural diversification and multifunctionality based on new activities initiated by farmers (Gasson 1988; Oostindie et al. 2006; Van der Ploeg 2003; Shucksmith et al. 1989). However, little attention has been paid so far to the initiation of side activities in rural areas by non-farmers. In addition to farmers, rural areas accommodate residents without an agricultural background.

It is important to stress at this point that the locations of the household and the job are often different. As rural areas are deficient in job opportunities, many of their rural inhabitants are likely to commute to other areas for employment (Green & Meyer 1997). However, rural residents can work in a nearby town or urban centre but also start a side activity as an option to earn extra income. The focus of this paper is therefore on people who live in rural areas, have a job elsewhere and are able to initiate a side activity where they live.

There are numerous reasons why we are focusing on side activities. First, side activities can have spatial and economic effects on rural areas and this may have future rural policy implications. Furthermore, it is important to know whether these activities require active public policies. Because a characteristic of side activities is that they are on a relatively small scale, and in most cases unregistered,[2] the results of this research can be of great importance and relevance in suggesting future policy interventions in order to stimulate or inhibit these

[2] It is a fact that many side activities are not registered in the records of any professional organization or other institution. As a consequence, side activities cannot be traced via tax authorities. The latter cannot confirm their economic contribution.

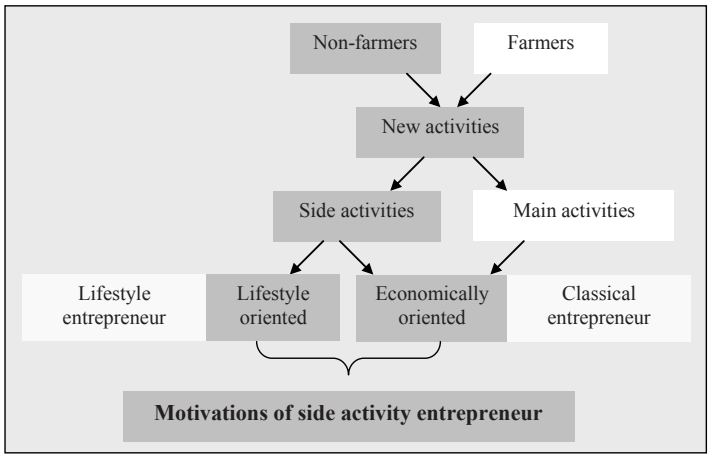
activities. In addition, side activities hold the promise of improving the character of the countryside, of contributing to the quality of the landscape and ecology, of enhancing the quality of life in rural areas and of contributing to local economic performance. Moreover, side activities are easier to initiate than 'main' activities, as they involve less risk and do not need a great number of resources to start up (e.g. land/space, credit, employees). Hence, the focus on side activities initiated by non-farmers in rural areas. We have labelled the individuals who initiate these activities 'side activity entrepreneurs'.

Bearing in mind the recent changes in rural restructuring and the emergence of new activities in the countryside, and because of the scarcity of prior evidence, we lack theoretical appreciation of why individuals decide to start side activities. Consequently, the purpose of this paper is to define side activities and examine what types of motive the side activities proprietors may have. Accordingly, the main research question of this paper is: *what could be the motivations to start a side activity? Are these economically or lifestyle-oriented based on the entrepreneurial literature?* The answer to this may have implications not only on the future development of these activities, but also on rural policy and possible effects on rural development and quality of life.

3.2 Outline

(1) We start this paper with a brief discussion of the emergence of new activities in rural areas. (2) We then define the term 'side activities'. (3) Thirdly, we present a brief historical overview of entrepreneurial research and we refer to the variety of different types of entrepreneurs. We focus only on two types of the various entrepreneurial types, namely classical and lifestyle entrepreneurs (the reasons for this selection are mentioned below). (4) Then, we propose a continuum along which we position the motivations of side activity entrepreneurs and review the two selected types of entrepreneurs (classical and lifestyle). (5) In the discussion section, we set out the argument for our expectations of where the side activity entrepreneurs are to be found on the continuum, and (6) in the last instance, we provide conclusions concerning side activity entrepreneurs and recommend future research potentials (Figure 1).

Figure 1. Outline of the paper
(The grey boxes indicate the focus of the paper)



3.3 The emergence of new activities

As noted in the introduction, rural areas offer new opportunities for a variety of new economic activities. An increasing demand for recreational and tourist activities, quality and regional food production and residential functions, as well as the protection of biotopes and wildlife, all offer new possibilities for income generation. These new activities can contribute to the transformation of the rural economy (Daalhuizen et al. 2003; Van Huylenbroeck et al. 2004; O'Connor et al. 2006).

Additionally, the fact that rural employment, particularly in non-agricultural sectors in terms of small and medium-sized enterprises, is growing fast should be stressed (North & Smallbone 1995, p. 1517). This is even more important as these new activities can contribute not only to the transformation of the local economy, but also to the expansion of local networks, the interrelationships between different actors in rural areas, and the viability of rural areas and rural societies (Anderson 2000; Freshwater 2000; Labrianidis 2004; Mis & Kata 2005; Hoggart 1990).

The emergence of these new activities in rural areas could also be considered as composites of rural entrepreneurship, with the latter being regarded as an important factor for rural economic development and as a key to rural revitalization (Gladwin et al. 1989). In general terms, rural entrepreneurship is part of a larger economic shift in the rural economy, away from agriculture and industrial production towards a more service-intensive economy. In this shift, urban centres often progress rapidly while rural areas lag behind. It is a fact that rural areas are facing many negative developments, such as agricultural decline, rural

depopulation, one-sided economic composition, increasing unemployment and decreasing wages. In this transition, rural entrepreneurship could play a role in ameliorating these negative developments, with one way possibly being through the emergence of new types of activities (see above).

Furthermore, as Oksa (1991, p. 9) concluded: 'most of the rural population in developed Western countries earns their livelihood from activities other than agriculture and forestry. Because international economic developments create additional pressures to reduce agricultural production, the future prospects of rural areas are more dependent on new activities in rural areas'. The emergence of these new activities in rural areas takes the form of main and side activities. Main activities provide the main income and side activities provide a side income for the rural household. Below, we define the term side activities.

3.4 Working definition of side activity

Various terms and definitions have been used in the international literature to describe a side activity. Terms such as non-farm or off-farm activities, diversified activities, other gainful activities, auxiliary activities, avocation and side work on or off the farm have been broadly used in the literature (Carter 2001; Chaplin et al.; 2004; Demeke 1997; Gasson 1988). Our definition of side activities is:

> Side activities aim to provide the initiator with a secondary income and are carried out in rural households.

The definition makes explicit that these activities yield an additional income for the household and that they are home-based activities. Moreover, side activities can be categorized into small-scale industrial production, small-scale agricultural production, service provision, landscape management, tourism, recreation, craft production and residential. As stated in the introduction, individuals who start a side activity are referred to as side activity entrepreneurs. With regard to entrepreneurial literature, it can be argued that side activity entrepreneurs are similar to part-time entrepreneurs. If we turn to the side activities themselves, we observe that by definition individuals initiate an activity to earn an additional income, whilst simultaneously being employed elsewhere or receiving an income from another source (e.g. public welfare or pension). However, based on our definition, individuals who have a side activity are not considered as part-time entrepreneurs for two main reasons. First, because they do not always hold salaried employment and secondly because side activity entrepreneurs are not considered self-employed as part-time entrepreneurs are.

In order to examine this specific type of entrepreneur, below we briefly review the entrepreneurial research in general and the variety of different types of entrepreneurs. This will provide us with a base from which to compare side activity entrepreneurs with other entrepreneurial types that have been described and examined in the literature so far and examine what types of motive the side activity entrepreneur is expected to possess.

3.5 Types of entrepreneurs

3.5.1 Historical overview

Much attention has been paid to the subject of the entrepreneur over the last three centuries. Entrepreneurship is not a new phenomenon, but attempts to study it systematically are relatively recent (Morris et al. 2001). Morris et al. (2001, p. 36) argue that 'while the term *entrepreneurship* has been in use for close to three hundred years, as a discipline entrepreneurship remains in its infancy'. Many scholars and researchers continue to put forward various definitions of entrepreneurship, the nature of the entrepreneur, the circumstances which give rise to entrepreneurship, how the environment affects the decision to become an entrepreneur, and why entrepreneurs spend time, talent and treasure (the three Ts of entrepreneurship) to start a business (Amit et al. 1993).

Furthermore, the study and research of entrepreneurship extends across a wide range of disciplines that have attempted to describe and explain entrepreneurship. Some of these disciplines include the decision sciences, economics, sociology, psychology, history, management and political sciences (Brockhaus 1980; Chell et al. 1991; Montanye 2006; Scase & Goffee 1982).

Amit et al. (1993) concluded that it is probably over-ambitious to expect only a single theory because of the interdisciplinary nature of entrepreneurship. Some of the key descriptions of the entrepreneur that have been commonly used include characteristics such as risk-taking, the need for achievement, innovation, creativity, self-confidence and leadership (Cunningham & Lischeron 1991; McClelland 1965; Stathopoulou & Skuras 2000). Personal attributes such as independence, locus of control, self-reliance, confidence, initiative and resourcefulness have also been frequently cited as closely associated with entrepreneurial values, behaviour and motives (Hornaday & Aboud 1971; McClelland 1965; Mueller & Thomas 2000; Timmons 1978). However, there is no common definition or model explaining the entrepreneur (Brockhaus 1980; Churchill & Lewis 1986). Moreover, Brockhaus and Horwitz (1985) concluded that 'the literature appears to support the argument that there is no generic definition of the entrepreneur, or if there is we do not have the psychological instruments to discover it'. Given this brief discussion of the classical view of

entrepreneurship, Kibly (1971) compared the search for the entrepreneur with the story of hunting the Heffalump (see Milne 1926, Chapter 5 & Milne 1928, Chapter 3):

> The Heffalump is a rather large and very important animal. He has been hunted by many individuals using various ingenious trapping devices, but no one so far has succeeded in capturing him. All who claim to have caught sight of him report that he is enormous, but disagree on his particularities. Not having explored his current habitat with sufficient care, some hunters have used as bait their own favourite dishes and have then tried to persuade people that what they caught was a Heffalump. However, very few are convinced, and the search goes on (Kilby 1971, p. 1).

Although the search for the Heffalump as described by Kilby (1971) continues with no consensus on a universally acceptable definition of the entrepreneur (Perry 1990), Mueller and Thomas (2000, p. 55) argue that 'there is a general agreement that the entrepreneur is a self-motivated individual who starts and builds an enterprise relying mainly on self rather than others to formulate and implement his goals'. Moreover, similar concepts are encompassed by different definitions of entrepreneurship and as Hisrich et al. (2005) state: 'Although each definition views entrepreneurs from a slightly different perspective, they all contain similar notions, such as newness, organizing, creating, wealth and risk-taking.'

In summary, entrepreneurs and the specific characteristics and definitions of entrepreneurs are still under debate. Nevertheless, various typologies have been used to categorize entrepreneurs and to make the research into entrepreneurs more systematic. Below we present a variety of entrepreneurial typologies and examine which of these typologies are relevant for the side activity entrepreneur group.

3.5.2 A variety of typologies

In the past, much entrepreneurial research has questioned how entrepreneurs are similar to or different from the general population (Naffziger et al. 1994; Vesper 1980; Woo et al. 1991). The question of what an entrepreneur is has been researched more than any other in the area of entrepreneurial research (Morris et al. 2001). Morris et al. (2001) suggest that 'it may be more helpful to recognize that there are different types or categories of entrepreneurs'. However, the literature on entrepreneurial typologies is not consistent either as regards research approaches or definitions (Doty & Glick 1994; Rich 1992).

Many researchers have based their typologies upon empirical analyses. More specifically, Lafuente and Salas (1989) identified four types of entrepreneurs in their classification: craftsmen, motivated by the nature of work; family entrepreneurs, who place priority on family welfare and meeting a challenge; managerial entrepreneurs who search for self-

development; and risk entrepreneurs who are risk-takers. In another study, Dunkelberg and Cooper (1982) drew a distinction between craftsmen, growth-oriented and independent entrepreneurs. Ronstadt (1984, 1985) identified another typology of ventures: lifestyle ventures, small profitable ventures and high-growth ventures. Through his empirical work, Miner (2000) has developed a framework of four entrepreneurial categories based on different personality types: the personal achievers, the 'super' sales people, the expert idea generators and the real managers (Miner 2000).

Nonetheless, the literature and research over the past decades on entrepreneurial typologies provide consistent support for two dominant types of entrepreneurs: opportunists and craftsmen (Smith 1967; Smith & Miner 1983) with the former to be considered financially motivated and the latter less so. In line with that, the Kauffman Center for Entrepreneurial Leadership introduces a similar distinction: *High growth* and *Lifestyle* entrepreneurs (Henderson 2002). Furthermore, Lewis (2006) argues that a number of contributions have been put forward to support the dualisms presented here. In this paper, we use a similar distinction between the two dominant types and define them accordingly as *classical* and *lifestyle* entrepreneurs. The reason for this distinction is that we wish to clearly separate the classical type of entrepreneur, who is mainly economically oriented, from the lifestyle type of entrepreneur, who is mainly lifestyle-oriented and not economically driven. Amit et al. (1993, p. 816) also suggest that entrepreneurs can be categorized into two main categories, profit-seeking and non-profit-seeking. However, it should be noted that entrepreneurial typologies are based upon empirical analyses and reflect the idiosyncrasies of particular studies and the different criteria that are employed (Woo et al. 1991).

The distinction between classical and lifestyle entrepreneurs provides a foundation for examining the motivations of side activity entrepreneurs. Below, we present the motivations of these two distinctive types and examine to what extent the motivations of side activity entrepreneurs are similar to or different from the motivations of classical and lifestyle entrepreneurs. Although it could be argued that this may be a quite static or one-dimensional view of entrepreneurs, we purposely made this distinction to clearly separate the motives by nature (economic and non-economic). This could provide a degree of reference for our study and assist us in examining to what extent side activity entrepreneurs are economically or non-economically oriented.

3.6 Motivations of side activity entrepreneurs

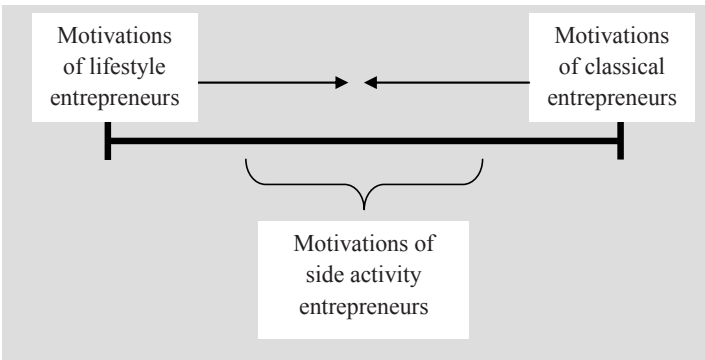
By examining the motivations of side activity entrepreneurs, we can obtain an overview of what drives people to start such an activity. Furthermore, this could have implications not only in predicting the future perspectives of side activities, but may also affect future rural

policies, the development of rural areas and the potential role of rural entrepreneurship in creating job opportunities, for example. As stated in the introduction, we want to determine what types of motivation the side activity entrepreneur could have. Below, we examine who the side activity entrepreneurs are. Are they mainly lifestyle or economically oriented, a combination of the two, or a totally different type? In order to answer this question, we refer to the characteristics and motivations of the two main types of entrepreneurs mentioned above.

3.6.1 The continuum of side activity entrepreneurs

In order to examine the motives of side activity entrepreneurs, we introduce the continuum below (Figure 2). The motives of the purely lifestyle entrepreneur are situated at the one end and the motives of the purely classical entrepreneur are at the other end. The motives of individual entrepreneurs can be found at any place on the continuum. We use this as a guide to group individual entrepreneurial motives to describe what motivates those who set up side activities. Below, we examine which characteristics of classical and lifestyle entrepreneurs side activity entrepreneurs are also expected to have.

Figure 2. Continuum of side activity entrepreneurs



3.7 Classical entrepreneurs

Based on the distinction between the two dominant types described above, we classify the classical entrepreneurs as mainly economically oriented. Based on this distinction, we refer to the definition of *High growth entrepreneurs* from the Kauffman Center for Entrepreneurial Leadership to describe how we perceive classical entrepreneurs in this study:

> High growth entrepreneurs are typically motivated to start and develop larger, highly visible and more valuable firms. These entrepreneurs commonly focus on obtaining the resources necessary to fuel growth' (cited in Henderson 2002, p. 49).

Although the economic rewards are not explicitly stated in most of the entrepreneurial definitions, the following definition by Amit et al. (1993) assumes that entrepreneurs are profit driven. This definition is limited to economic rewards but, as explained below, other factors also motivate entrepreneurial activity.

> Entrepreneurs are individuals who innovate, identify and create business opportunities, assemble and co-ordinate new combinations of resources so as to extract the most profits from their innovations in an uncertain environment (Amit et al. 1993, p. 817).

An early definition of entrepreneurship in the eighteenth century used the term entrepreneur mainly for economic purposes and to describe the process of risk-taking and uncertainty.[3] In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, entrepreneurs were frequently viewed from an economic perspective (Hisrich et al. 2005). Furthermore, Say (1880) broadened the definition to unite all the means of production. Then, in the early twentieth century the term innovation was introduced as a way to describe entrepreneurship (Schumpeter 1934).

The classical entrepreneur emerges from classic economic theory. Schumpeter (1934), one of the famous economists of the nineteenth century, conceptualizes entrepreneurial activity as a major element for economic performance and as a driver of capitalism and economic activities. In addition, economic theorists propose that entrepreneurs are essential to economic development (Schumpeter 1934; Thomson et al. 2000). For example, Say (1880) was the first classical economist to describe an entrepreneur as the economic agent who unites all the means of production, the labour force and capital or property. With regard to different views and definitions of entrepreneurship, we propose the definition of Hisrich and Brush (1985). We use this definition as a reference point for our later discussion:

> Entrepreneurship is the process of creating something new with value by devoting the necessary time and effort, assuming the accompanying financial, psychic, and social risks, and receiving the resulting rewards of monetary and personal satisfaction and independence (Hisrich & Brush 1985, p. 18).

We chose the above definition because it emphasizes four basic aspects of an entrepreneur which are the main components of what we consider the classical entrepreneur. The first aspect is the creation of something new, because entrepreneurs have the ability to create and build something from nothing (Timmons 1994, p. 7). Second, it involves the devotion of the necessary time and effort and, as is mentioned by Hisrich et al. (2005), 'only those going

[3] Defining entrepreneurship. Available online at www.gdrc.org/icm/micro/define-micro.html Accessed 10 December 2008.

through the entrepreneurial process appreciate the significant amount of time and effort it takes to create something new'. The third aspect is that entrepreneurs consider a variety of risks expressed in different forms – from financial and psychological factors to social ones. The rewards of being an entrepreneur is the final aspect and comprises not only independence and personal satisfaction, but also profit rewards, which also indicate the degree of entrepreneurial success.

3.7.1 Entrepreneurial motives

Many studies have been devoted to identifying entrepreneurial drivers and what motivates people to become entrepreneurs. The motives and characteristics of entrepreneurs in particular have been well documented in the literature (Cromie 1987; Gartner 1985, 1988; Naffziger et al. 1994; Parker 2004; Wagner & Ziltener 2008). In the search for entrepreneurial motives there is no agreement amongst scholars on what the main characteristics of an entrepreneur are. It is argued that entrepreneurs take into consideration multiple reasons for creating their own businesses and that these can be distinguished by economic and non-economic motives (Cromie 1987).

Traditionally it is assumed that economic motives or, in other words, the prospect of profits are crucial for most entrepreneurs (Cromie 1987; Longenecker et al. 2003). Based on this view, entrepreneurial activities are considered as being mainly driven by economics, with people engaged in economic activities having generating income in mind. As Longenecker et al. (2003, p. 10) state, 'Like any other job or career, entrepreneurship provides for one's financial needs. Starting one's own business is a way to earn money'. The economic criterion is thus based on the classical view of entrepreneurship and is considered part of a general discussion about the economic benefits of entrepreneurship. In addition, as Baumol (1990) states, people choose to become self-employed because their wealth, power and prestige can also be maximized. Furthermore, Moore and Mueller (2002) examine an alternative and often neglected point of view of the motives for starting a business. They emphasize that push factors also play an important role in becoming self-employed. More specifically, they argue that some individuals are pushed into self-employment because of diminished employment opportunities in the paid sector (unemployment). In their study, the main reason for starting a business was because no other work was available and therefore that starting their own business was an opportunity to be employed (Moore & Mueller 2002). This latter type of motive is also related to economic rewards.

Not only monetary but also non-monetary reasons play a role in becoming an entrepreneur (Douglas & Shepherd 2002; Parker 2004). Douglas and Shepherd (2002, p. 88) argue that 'there is still doubt on the suggestion that people mainly choose self-employment as a means

of gaining higher income than they could attain as employees'. Bearing in mind the great variety of literature and empirical studies (Douglas & Shepherd 2002; Hessels et al. 2008; Lafuente & Salas 1989; Parker 2004; Woo et al. 1991), the following motives for becoming an entrepreneur have been, to a great extent, examined. *Autonomy/independence* (Collins & Moore 1970), *the need for achievement* (McClelland 1961, 1965) *self-realization* (Parker 2004), *the desire to exploit an opportunity* (Bhola et al. 2006; Gaglio & Katz 2001; Holcombe 2003; McMullen et al. 2007), *dissatisfaction with career* (Douglas & Shepherd 2002; Storey 1991), and *the desire to innovate* (Schumpeter 1934).

Studies of the literature on entrepreneurial motives do not deny the importance of economic reasons for starting a business, they reveal that people become entrepreneurs for different reasons and that the focus is redefined on the expressive side of life (Cromie 1987; Frankel 1984). Frankel's (1984, p. 24) statement that 'in the past, the entrepreneur's pursuits were money and recognition; today they are autonomy, creativity, and adventure' emphasizes the fact that non-economic motives compete strongly with economic motives as a basis for becoming an entrepreneur in the twenty-first century. Moreover, Folkeringa et al. (2009) conclude that financial motives are important but do not play the main role in becoming an entrepreneur. They state that immaterial profits are also important, such as the enjoyment of the activity in itself, the effective use of time and the challenge of a start-up.

From this literature review on entrepreneurial motives, there appears another type of entrepreneur that could not be omitted, namely the part-time entrepreneur. As noted above, side activities entrepreneurs are not considered part-time entrepreneurs. Nevertheless, they are similar in the sense that both receive an income and simultaneously have an additional activity, and in that respect, part-time entrepreneurs could assist in sketching the theoretical background of the motives for starting a side activity.

If we take a closer look at the theoretical rationales for being a part-time entrepreneur, we conclude that these can in general be both economically and non-economically oriented (Delmar et al. 2008; Folta et al. 2010; Moore & Mueller 2002). For example, Delmar et al., (2008) in their report on combining self-employment with employment, outline a systematic overview of different motivations to become *combiners* (as they call them). They are summarized into 1) supplementary utility motivation, 2) unemployment motivation and 3) transitional motivation. This implies that in general terms, motivations for becoming a part-time entrepreneur can be divided into economic and non-economic ones. Therefore, in their motivations, part-time entrepreneurs are not much different from classical entrepreneurs. Accordingly, from this point forward, we treat part-time entrepreneurs as classical entrepreneurs. This will assist us in further clarifying the distinction between classical and lifestyle entrepreneurs.

3.8 Lifestyle entrepreneurs

Alongside the classical type of entrepreneur mentioned above, the second type that we focus on is the lifestyle entrepreneur, a term which was first introduced by William Wetzel in 1987[4] (Henricks 2002a). Wetzel (cited in Henricks 2002a, 2002b) recognizes lifestyle entrepreneurs as a specific type of business owner. 'Lifestyle ventures are usually ventures that are run by people who like being their own bosses,' he says. 'But they're in it for the income as well. Indeed, lifestyle entrepreneurs offer a different view of success than those who are mainly after wealth accumulation'. Lifestyle entrepreneurs start a business not primarily for economic rewards but for a different type of pay-off, namely the opportunity for a better lifestyle (Henricks 2002a; Rodriguez 2003).[5] Based on this distinction, we refer to the definition of *Lifestyle entrepreneurs* from the Kauffman Center for Entrepreneurial Leadership:

> Lifestyle entrepreneurs start new firms to provide family income or support a desired lifestyle. These entrepreneurs typically seek independence and control over their own life schedule. In some cases, lifestyle entrepreneurs sacrifice growth for lifestyle choices. Because of their lifestyle focus, the benefits for these entrepreneurs relate primarily to the quality of life in local communities (cited in Henderson 2002, p. 49).

The main difference between the classical and lifestyle entrepreneur is the focus on profit and money-making (Norman 2004). Norman (2004) argues that for the classical entrepreneur, the main focus is on economic profits, sales growth and expansion. For the lifestyle entrepreneur, in addition to money, the driving force is a strong desire for independence.[6] Furthermore, these entrepreneurs, 'choose to follow a lifestyle; whereas the main goal is quite remote from the conventional definition of the rational, profit-maximizing entrepreneur found in mainstream economic theory' (Stathopoulou et al. 2004, p. 412).

More specifically, lifestyle entrepreneurs view their decisions to start businesses not as careers but as ways to achieve self-fulfilment (Buttner & Moore 1997). Self-fulfilment was ranked as the most important measure of success by this type of entrepreneur, whereas profit came in at second place in research conducted by Buttner and Moore (1997, p. 43). In their research, they argue that lifestyle entrepreneurs: 'use entrepreneurship as a vehicle for

[4] William Wetzel is the Director Emeritus of the University of New Hampshire (Henricks 2002a).

[5] A research survey conducted by Warrillow and Company in 2002 (Available online at http://www.warrillow.com/index.aspx Accessed 20 October 2008) concluded that 90 percent of approximately 20 million U.S. small businesses were started by a desire for independence or a desire to do a particular job, not for financial reasons (Henricks 2002a).

[6] Lifestyle entrepreneurs are not averse to making money. It is the lack of focus on money when starting their business which counts. Many of them are economically successful and independent (Norman 2004).

satisfying their need for self-fulfilment'. Self-fulfilment or self-realization has also been mentioned for the classical entrepreneurial type. However, for the lifestyle type of entrepreneur, it plays a more important role in determining individuals to be engaged in an economic activity. Nonetheless, even if lifestyle entrepreneurs are looking for quality of life through their business, they can also achieve a profitable outcome. More specifically, Deakins and Freel (2003, p. 277) describe them as sole traders, employing few or no people, where their objective is to provide their families with sufficient income and maintaining a lifestyle. This lifestyle orientation does not necessarily mean financial suicide or business stagnation, but rather an opportunity to be engaged in something that they enjoy (Ateljevic & Doorne 2000; Gomez Velasco & Saleilles 2007). Moreover, the research by Jongeneel et al. (2008) on 495 multifunctional farms concluded that farmers benefited not only in terms of money from the tourist activities on their farms, but also in terms of the psychological income (pleasure) derived from interacting with people.

Alongside the discussion of lifestyle entrepreneurs and the definition of side activity set out above, it is relevant to mention the term *lifestyle block*. The term was first introduced by real estate agents in the 1980s in New Zealand to describe rural smallholdings. The purpose of a smallholding is to attract people who wish to live a rural lifestyle but whose income is derived from non-farming activities (Fairweather 1996; Paterson 2005). Fairweather and Robertson's (2000) definition is:

> Lifestyle block is a rural smallholding that allows people to enjoy living in a rural setting while still working in an urban area. Moreover, the main aim of people who live on lifestyle blocks is a rural lifestyle rather than any form of agricultural production (Fairweather & Robertson 2000, pp. 4-5).

When connecting lifestyle block with what we call lifestyle, it is assumed that people who live in rural areas are looking for a better quality of life in local communities and that they are interested in maintaining a rural way of life. Their main income is derived from non-farming-related activities, often they have to commute to employment and they may have the opportunity to start a secondary activity on their rural property.

3.9 Discussion

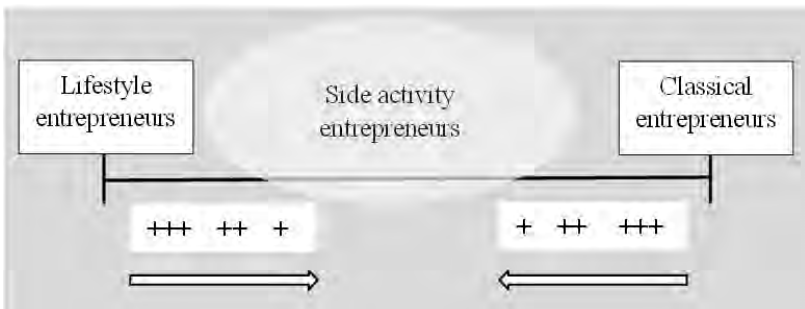
So far, we have described two main types of entrepreneurs: the classical and the lifestyle. We shall now examine which aspects we expect side activity entrepreneurs to have and which are similar to or different from these two types. With respect to the continuum (Figure 2), we suggest that the motives of the classical entrepreneurs are at one end, the motives of lifestyle

entrepreneurs at the other end, while the motives of side activity entrepreneurs fall in between (see Figure 3). Various types of motivation can be located along the continuum, from purely lifestyle to purely classical entrepreneurial motives. We argue that entrepreneurs can find their place along the continuum, suggesting that the motivations of people could be a mix of economic and those opposed to economic motives.

At the right end of the continuum are the motivations of the classical entrepreneur. As we explained earlier, based on the definition of Hisrich and Brush (1985), the classical entrepreneur refers to a person who devotes considerable time and effort to creating something new, takes economic, social, and psychological risks, and furthermore expects mainly monetary rewards. Additionally, judging from a historical perspective, the entrepreneurial motives of starting a new business emerges from classical economic theory, which conceptualizes an entrepreneurial activity as an economic activity (Say 1880; Schumpeter 1934).

The left side of the continuum is occupied with the motivations of lifestyle entrepreneurs. Based on the Kauffman Center for Entrepreneurial Leadership definition, these individuals start businesses not only for income purposes, but to support a desired lifestyle. They benefit in terms of quality of life, independence and control over their own lives. Taking a closer look at the continuum (Figure 3), if we move from the left towards the centre, the influence of lifestyle motivations on the side activity lessens (Figure 3). The same occurs when we move from the right of the continuum towards the centre. With the placement of these two types on the continuum, we suggest that the classical and lifestyle entrepreneurial motives have strong ties at the extreme ends and less strong ties as we move towards the centre.

Figure 3. Relationship of lifestyle, classical and side activity entrepreneurs on the continuum



In order to examine the motivations of side activity entrepreneurs of the above two types, we propose the following hypothesis:

When starting a side activity, motives are mainly lifestyle-oriented,
(economic motives are also present but not the main goal).

From the hypothesis, we assume that individuals who start a side activity are mainly influenced by lifestyle purposes, with economic reasons also apparent, but not the main driving force. This assumption is based on the fact that these activities by definition do not provide a main income, meaning that people are probably not mainly financially motivated. Moreover, considering the motivations of classical and lifestyle entrepreneurs, we expect that the driving forces when starting an activity are a combination of not only monetary but also of non-monetary reasons.

Although this paper is theoretical in nature, we briefly present some results from a pilot study from the Netherlands.[7] The initial inspiration to include lifestyle as a motivation to start a side activity came from this pilot, where it was found that the main motivation of people when initiating side activities was to support a desired lifestyle. The economic factor fell into second place, followed by factors such as independence and the need for social contact (Table 1). This description is linked to the definition of the lifestyle entrepreneur who starts a business primarily for lifestyle purposes, with economic reward also apparent but in a secondary place. These people could be defined as 'individuals who operate a business closely aligned with their personal values, interests, beliefs and passions' (Henricks 2002a; Marcketti et al. 2006). Further empirical research has to be done to support this thesis more strongly.

Table 1. List of motivations when starting a side activity
(Source: own data, pilot study, 2007)

Motivations	Cases	%
1. Lifestyle	33	**53**
2. Financial	16	**26**
3. Social contacts	8	13
4. Independence	5	8
Total	62	100

[7] The pilot study was conducted in two Dutch municipalities, namely Ooststellingwerf and Noordenveld. Although, in Chapter 2 we introduced five municipalities, in this chapter we only have data about motivations from the aforementioned two municipalities.

With respect to the definition of Hisrich and Brush (1985), we consider side activity entrepreneurs as creating something new and spending a considerable amount of time and effort on it in the same way as classical entrepreneurs do, but the presumed risks and rewards are expected to be different for them. We do not expect side activity entrepreneurs to undertake big risks when setting up such activities because these activities are expected to be small in scale and with low economic rewards in most cases. Therefore, risks are not regarded as the main factor in the decision-making process when starting a side activity. On the other hand, the expected rewards are mainly non-monetary in terms of social networks, independence or the search for a better quality of life in local communities. Furthermore, we expect side activity entrepreneurs to value the success of their activity differently to those who are mainly after accumulating wealth, such as in the case of the classical entrepreneur (Henricks 2002a; Rodriguez 2003). The success of side activity entrepreneurs can be measured in terms of social contacts, pleasure and the fulfilment of their interests, and not only in purely economic terms as in most business start-ups.

In summary, considering these aspects of lifestyle and classical entrepreneurs, we conclude that side activity entrepreneurs are mainly lifestyle-oriented. On the proposed continuum, we position side activity entrepreneurs between the classical and lifestyle entrepreneurs, but with an inclination towards the lifestyle side.

3.10 Conclusions

Side activity entrepreneurs can be characterized as people who do not start a business primarily for economic rewards, but for a different type of pay-off, mainly the pursuit of a better lifestyle (Henricks 2002a; Rodriguez 2003). Although they can also be interested in the income, this may not be their main motivation. Indeed, in line with the results from the pilot study, side activities proprietors are mainly driven by lifestyle purposes with economic rewards playing a secondary role, as was expected. Therefore, starting a side activity could be a lifestyle issue, probably intended to maintain a rural way of life (rural lifestyle), but also because of a lack of income-generating opportunities in the common labour market. This lifestyle preference may drive rural policy into unfamiliar ground, as this is a neglected aspect of rural development to date.

Furthermore, the fact that side activity entrepreneurs are mainly motivated by lifestyle purposes suggests that their activities will probably remain small scale. This could imply that many of these activities will probably not grow and may not be directly necessary to rural policies and more specifically to the spatial schemes of local governments. Moreover, this could mean that not only do side activities not disturb the landscape, they may add positively to the attractiveness of the countryside for tourists and for local residents (Broekhuizen et al.

1997). However, a potential explanation of this lifestyle phenomenon and its implications deserves greater empirical attention.

Further implications for policymakers in the area of rural small business and rural entrepreneurship stem from the above conclusions. These could be related to rural development, and more specifically to the local communities. Side activities can be regarded as a challenge through which diversification of activities in rural areas can be achieved, not only by farmers, but also by non-farmers. For example, the search for new activities can offer new employment opportunities (Carter 2001). In this paper, we suggest that not only farmers but also other rural inhabitants are capable of having a more important role in stimulating new economic activities in rural areas than has previously been considered. Furthermore, the role and importance of these activities in generating employment in rural areas is particularly noticeable in densely populated land-scarce economies, where agriculture has reached its limits, where counter-urbanization takes place (Champion et al. 1989) and where rural inhabitants are looking for new ways to generate income (Shand 1986). Side activities could contribute not only to the local economy and employment, but also to the expansion of social networks, the interrelations between different actors in rural areas and the viability of rural areas and rural societies (Anderson 2000; Freshwater 2000; Labrianidis 2004; Mis & Kata 2005; Hoggart 1990).

In that respect, rural entrepreneurship could have specific policy relevance in the near future and may offer new opportunities for rural growth. Thus, policy intervention and support could play a positive role in encouraging and stimulating new economic activities in rural areas through offering funds or subsidies. In addition, lifestyle entrepreneurs are often inexperienced in entrepreneurship and could benefit in practical as well as financial terms from potential small business start-up support from government funds or programmes (Frankel 1984).

In summary, even though many scholars and policymakers have promoted and stimulated entrepreneurial activities and start-ups as a means of rural economic development, few have explored the possible growth in life quality derived from owning and operating a small firm for lifestyle purposes in rural areas (Henderson 2002; Marcketti et al. 2006; Scarborough & Zimmerer 2003). This provides new possibilities for future research. By examining the role and the importance of side activities in rural areas, we have an overview of what drives entrepreneurs to start such activities and can predict the future perspectives of side activities in the countryside. Furthermore, we contribute to the possibilities for rural development with the initiation of side activities, and to future policy implications related to new activities in the countryside and, especially, activities which are related to lifestyle purposes.

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Reflections and additional information

The aim of this chapter was to provide us with a base to compare side activity entrepreneurs with other entrepreneurial types. This chapter was written before the main data collection, having in mind to explore previous research on entrepreneurship and indicate where side activity entrepreneurs could fit based on start-up motives. At that point of the research process we did not take into account small business literature and previous research on farmers' side activities. This theoretical gap is covered after the data collection in Chapters 4, 5 and 6.

Furthermore, the conclusion of this chapter that side activity owners are expected to be more closely to lifestyle rather than on classical entrepreneurs is further examined in this dissertation by examining start-up motives (Chapter 4), growth expectations (Chapter 6) and on taking a qualitative approach on initiating and enabling factors to start a side activity (Chapter 5).

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4 Non-farmers' motives for starting-up a side activity

4 Non-farmers' motives for starting-up a side activity[1]

Abstract

This article focuses on side activities of non-farmers in rural areas in the Netherlands. A side activity is a small-scale home-based activity, which provides a supplementary income at the household level. Until now, mainstream rural policies do not take into account non-farmer's side activities and understanding the rationale behind them is important to know the specific goals and needs of this group. Therefore, this study explores the motives of non-farmers to start a side activity. A factor analysis performed on different motives showed three separate components: *Internal aspirations and pursuits*, *Economic wellbeing and independence* and *Rurality and lifestyle*. Economic considerations are apparent but not the main motive for the start-up. Examining start-up motives can also be important in allocating funding resources to stimulate side activities in rural areas or even in targeting not only in economic but also in personal incentives to facilitate side activities carried out from the rural household.

4.1 Introduction

In recent years, rural areas in Western societies have become increasingly multifunctional areas. They are not only places for agricultural production but increasingly places for leisure, recreation, working and living (Blekesaune et al. 2010; Marsden 1999; Van Dam et al. 2002; Woods 2010).

In line with this, the increasing demand of modern society for recreational and tourist activities, quality and regional food production and residential functions, as well as the protection of biotopes and wildlife, all offer new possibilities for additional income generation, especially for farm households (Barbieri & Valdivia 2010; Van Huylenbroeck et al. 2007; O'Connor et al. 2006). Although much research has been conducted on the initiation of secondary activities by farmers, described by means of terms such as pluriactivity and multifunctionality (Jongeneel et al. 2008, Van der Ploeg & Roep 2003; Van Huylenbroeck et al. 2007), research on secondary activities by non-farm households in rural areas is a neglected aspect of research and rural policies. It could be argued that this type of activities may also stimulate new employment opportunities and diversify the economic base of rural areas and this could further contribute to the development of rural communities and the

[1] This chapter is reprinted from Markantoni, M., S. Koster and D. Strijker. Non-farmers' motives for starting-up a side activity and has been submitted to an international journal.

quality of life. These secondary activities by non-farmers are called side activities in this article.

The focus of this article is thus on side activities of non-farmers in rural areas. A side activity is a small-scale home-based activity, which provides a supplementary income at the household level. They do not constitute a full-time job[2] and there are no employees involved. The side activities are undertaken mainly by one member of the household while direct family members may also help. The member of the household who is most involved in the side activity either combines the side activity with paid employment (fulltime/part-time), or combines the side activity with household tasks while the partner provides for the main income of the household. Besides this latter group there is a subgroup of owners who instead of waged employment, either have a pension or are under a social security benefits programme. For them a side activity is also a supplementary activity.

As not much is known about non-farmers' side activities, in this article we want to get a deeper understanding why this specific type of activities by non-farmers emerge, i.e. what are their start-up motives. Until now, mainstream rural policies do not take into account non-farmer's side activities, therefore, understanding the rationale behind them may be a key factor in recognizing the specific goals and needs of this group.

Examining start-up motives of non-farmers rural residents, first, should give an indication of what kind of activities are. For example, are the side activities proprietors interested mainly to earn an extra income or to meet a challenge and fulfil a personal dream? Insight in motives may also be an important factor in revealing the future potentials of these activities. The latter may have not only implications on the level of local services and facilities in rural areas but also about their spatial impact.

4.2 Positioning side activities into small businesses and secondary activities

Side activities of non-farming households have an intermediate position in the literature of small business, secondary activities of farmers and even hobbies. In order to base our expectations on their start-up motives we need first to know where side activities could be positioned in the related literature studies.

In the first place side activities can been seen as the complement of secondary activities of *farmers* within multifunctional agriculture. In the rural and farming context, different terms and definitions have been used to describe side activities of farmers. Bessant (2006), Bock, (2004) and Herslund (2007) use the terms of pluriactivity, diversification, other gainful activities, non-farm and off-farm activities by farmers or, more often, farmer's wives. The

[2] This could imply either seasonal activities or activities conducted during only some hours of a day or week.

reason to differentiate between farmers and non-farmers is that the latter have other (amounts of) resources at their disposal. Normally they have less land, and they probably master somewhat different knowledge and techniques. Furthermore, any attention for side activities of non-farmers is lacking, whereas a lot of research has been done on all kinds of aspects of farmers' side activities. See for example research on motives (McGehee & Kim 2004; Jongeneel et al. 2008), gender relations (Evans & Ilbery 1996; Gasson & Winter 1992), agro-food networks (Anthopoulou 2010; Goodman 2004) and impact on rural development and rural policies (Van der Ploeg & Renting 2000; Van der Ploeg & Roep 2003).

Secondly, side activities of both farmers and non-farmers can be seen as special cases of *small businesses* and within that of *micro-businesse*s or even *home-based businesses*. Side activities are indeed very small activities, there are seldom more than three persons engaged, nearly always family members (e.g. spouse, kids, parents) (see Markantoni et al. forthcoming). However, small businesses, micro-businesses and home-based businesses, are in general fulltime businesses that are meant to generate enough income for the owner to make a living. Side activities by definition differ in this respect in that they provide a supplementary and not a main income for the household.

Because side activities by definition aim to generate some extra income, they conceptually differ from hobby-activities. According to Oxford English Dictionary,[3] hobby is 'a favourite occupation or topic, pursued merely for the amusement or interest that it affords'. It is possible, that in terms of non-economic rewards (e.g. pleasure, enjoyment) side activities may have some similarities with hobbies. This is based on the fact that people do not have to make a living from a side activity.

Although non-farmers' side activities differ from the conceptions above (farmers' side activities, hobbies), or are very specific cases of a larger group (small businesses, micro-businesses, home-based businesses) we can use aspects of those concepts to base our expectations for the analysis of non-farmers' side activities motives.

This article is organised as follows. In the next section, we elaborate on theoretical perspectives concerning start-up motives from the different concepts mentioned above. Next, the way we collected the data and the methods employed are presented, together with the profile of the respondents. The analysis of the results follows, providing answer to the research question and the last section discusses and summarises the findings considering policy and future recommendations.

[3] Source: Oxford English Dictionary, Available online at http://www.oed.com/ Accessed 17 February 2010.

4.3 Farmers' and non-farmers' start-up motives

As yet, empirical material or a conceptual framework on side activities by non-farmers and more specific on the rationale behind them are not available. In order to base our expectations on motives of non-farmers' side activities, we apply elements of existing literature on start-up motives of related activities: the group of farmers (motives to become pluriactive) and the group of non-farmers entrepreneurs (motives to start a small business/micro-business, home-based business).

The fact that businesses are mixed-use spaces where the presence(s) of the other household members and their activities cannot be separated and ignored implies that household members also play role in the starting up of these businesses. Indeed, Aldrich and Cliff (2003) implore us to acknowledge that any decision to start-up a business is tied-up with the lives, background and the household situation. Actually, it is more the household than the individual that influence any decision.

Although the household plays an important role in the decision making process, it is difficult to study the household as a whole to determine the start-up motives. Likewise, the literature review below mainly refers and examines motives at the individual level. Actually, the person who is most involved in the side activity needs to be motivated to start a side activity. Therefore, when examining start-up motives we first turn to individual motives as the ones that highlight what triggers people to start-up a side activity in the context of this study.

4.3.1 Motives to become a pluriactive farmer

Motives to become a 'pluriactive' farmer, i.e. earning an income from another economic activity than just farming, have been extensively researched in literature (see for example, Bessant 2006; Kinsella et al. 2000; Van Huylenbroeck et al. 2007).[4] Pluriactivity is often understood as a response to survive the cost-price squeeze experienced in modernized agriculture and as a means to reduce income fluctuations (Van der Ploeg & Roep 2003). It is seen as a survival strategy (Bowler et al. 1996) but also as a way to achieve social status (Nickerson et al. 2001) and to participate in different social contexts (De Vries 1993). Furthermore, the desire for independence (Taylor & Little 1990), the need for flexible working hours (Bowler et al. 1996), career-related and lifestyle considerations (Barlett 1986; Bessant 2000), to contribute to the community (McGehee et al. 2006), because it is fun and exciting (Hendriksen & Klaver 1995), or even for hobby (Nickerson et al. 2001), have also

[4] Many studies have been exploring the terminologies about the origin of off-farm employment. Terms such as part-time farming, multiple job holding and pluriactivity have been proposed to overcome ambiguities (Bessant 2000). As the aim of the article is not to examine different terms, to avoid any confusion, when we refer to supplementary activities of farmers we refer to pluriactivity. According to Fuller (1990), pluriactivity includes a broader range of activities and types of return from farm and non-farm sources.

been reported as reasons to engage to a supplementary activity, especially by the farmers' wife (Bock 2002, 2004). In addition, farmers may have the necessary resources available to start a secondary activity. They probably have land and space required, or even spare time as a result of the mechanization and automation of agriculture. These could also function as motives for start-up (see the *resource-exploiting entrepreneur* by Alsos et al. 2003).

Other start-up motives have also been dealt with the preference for living in the countryside. Kristensen and Primdahl (2004, p. 3) argue for example that the decision to live in the countryside 'may be linked to the farm as a place or a property and based partly on culturally rooted traditions and functions related to the farm as a place to live…'. In line with that, the recent study of Primdahl et al. (2010) also shows that issues related to rural living and recreation are of importance in agriculture especially among part-time and hobby farmers (as the ones who bring urban ideas, capital and income).

Deriving from the above, it could be argued that pluriactivity does not result only in improving household income but that non-economic factors, such as social status, lifestyle, rural living, play important roles as well. For the group of non-farmers' side activities, the aim and the function of their activities is different in the sense that they cannot be connected directly with farming operations but there can be some similarities.

4.3.2 Motives to start a small business

In addition to motives for becoming a pluriactive farmer, substantial research has been devoted to identifying what motivates individuals to start a small business outside of the farm context (Birley & Westhead 1994; Lewis 2006; Reijonen 2008). Traditionally it is assumed that economic motives or, in other words, the prospect of profits are crucial for starting a business (Longenecker et al. 2003). This economic criterion is based on classical economic theory, where the purpose of investing in a business is to maximize ones profit, acting as an economic agent (Schumpeter 2003). In line with this, starting a business is often considered to be mainly driven by economic motives.

While economic motives have been discussed in literature for long time, there is also a lot to say about non-economic considerations for starting up a business. It is being argued that especially in small businesses the traditional ideas of business motivation have a peripheral sense (Gray 1998), implying that non-economic incentives seem to be more important than economic ones. Personal satisfaction and flexible lifestyle (Walker & Brown 2004), the effective use of time and balancing personal with family life (Anthopoulou 2010), to support a desired lifestyle (Ateljevic & Doorne 2000; Lewis 2006), achieving a quality of life or the need to be independent (Van Gelderen & Jansen 2006) are also considered to be important reasons to start-up a business. Moreover, Frankel (1993) emphasizes the fact that non-

economic motives compete strongly with economic motives in the twenty-first century. The above indicates that indeed also socio-psychological reasons interplay when it comes to the start-up decision than just financial enhancement. However, because for the small business owner, his/her business is the primary source of income, it is implicitly expected that the economic viability is more important than it is for side activities.

The non-economic motives is specifically captured with the behaviour of the *lifestyle entrepreneur* who is primarily described by the non-economic incentive (see, for example, Lewis 2006). Lifestyle entrepreneurs are mainly looking to support a better lifestyle (Deakins & Freel 2003), seeking enjoyment in their life (Henricks 2002) or wanting to achieve self-fulfilment (Buttner & Moore 1997). Yet, even if lifestyle entrepreneurs are searching primarily for quality of life through their business, they also want to achieve a certain outcome. This lifestyle orientation does not necessarily mean 'financial suicide', but an opportunity to be engaged in something that they enjoy and brings them pleasure (Ateljevic & Doorne 2000, Gomez Velasco & Saleilles 2007) which is more close to what to expect for side activities.

Summarizing from the above, we could argue that starting-up a business or a side activity is probably not organised around a singular purpose or one type of motivation. Start-up motives seem to be a mix of economic and non-economic (i.e. social and psychological reasons), with the latter to be mentioned and emphasized more often in lifestyle entrepreneurship. For side activities owners we expect non-economic related motives to be important for the start-up and to be more closely related to the motives of lifestyle entrepreneurs.

4.4 Data, methodology and the profile of the respondents

4.4.1 Data collection and methodology

The initial aim of this study was to find the side activities and examine the individual start-up motives. However, previous research and information on side activities was missing. A key reason for this absence is the relative 'invisibility' of side activities. For example, in the Netherlands many side activities are registered at the Chamber of Commerce and other professional organizations within the category of 'businesses' and not explicitly as side activities.[5] Furthermore, evidence from UK (Atterton & Affleck 2010) also shows that secondary activities do not seem to be fully registered. In order to gather the necessary data we travelled through the countryside and looked for roadside signs of side activities. To avoid

[5] The Chamber of Commerce does not offer the option to register as a 'side activity' only as 'business'.

missing cases, a snowballing method was also applied to the latter. Five per cent of the respondents were identified through snowballing.

This study is conducted in rural areas in the Netherlands. A specific characteristic of the Netherlands is that its countryside is relatively urbanized in comparison to other countries in Europe. A city can be reached within half an hour from almost anywhere in the Netherlands (OECD 2008), implying that access to rural areas is relatively easy (e.g. commuting, visiting countryside). The latter could also assist the combination of work with a side activity. The north of the Netherlands (i.e. the three provinces Friesland, Groningen and Drenthe) is considered to be the most rural part of the Netherlands based on address density and the perception of Dutch population (Haartsen et al. 2003; Heins 2002).

As this research is carried out in rural areas and examines rural side activities, the first concern for the area selection, was to avoid strong influence of big urban centers. Thereby, urbanized municipalities[6] were dropped out from the sampling frame. Further, based on two selection criteria (low and high touristic attractivity and businesses start-up rates),[7] 36 municipalities (out of 137), spread throughout the Netherlands were randomly selected to conduct this research.[8]

Side activities is a phenomenon happening at the household level (as the unit of consumption and income pooling activities). After all, the household is the place where individuals live and the place where decisions are made (Wheelock & Oughton 1996). In the research on which this article is based, we examine the motives of the household member who is more involved in the side activity. This approach will provide us with an indication of the rationale behind the side activity. Through this household member, we also gathered information about the broader household characteristics.

To gather further information a survey was conducted by means of face-to-face interviews with one member of the household. This way of interviewing was chosen in order to have personal interaction with the respondents but also to get a deeper understanding of the phenomenon side activities. During the fieldwork, 506 side activities by non-farmers were found. From these, 260 completed surveys were collected, resulting in a response rate of 51%. This response rate is relatively high compared to small business sector researches (see, for example, Greenbank 2001). This could have been expected because during the selection of the data the aim was to have a personal interaction with the respondents and this probably reduced the non-response rate (Singleton & Straits 2001). The survey consisted of open and

[6] Excluded municipalities with more than 1,500 addresses per km^2.
[7] These two criteria were chosen in order to examine whether there were regional differences in touristic and businesses start-up rates between the municipalities. However, the two criteria do not apply for this article.
[8] More information about the sampling frame of this study can be obtained by contacting the authors.

close-ended questions about the respondent, the household and the side activities, about start-up motives, location choice and growth expectations.[9]

Data analysis of this study is done in two phases. Firstly, the profile of the respondents is described and secondly, start-up motives are analysed, using a principal component analysis on the start-up motives to delineate their underlying dimensions.

4.4.2 Descriptive profile of the respondents

As we are interested in the motives of the household member who is most involved in the side activity, we sketch his/her profile first. Examining age, 40,6 per cent of the respondents range from 30 to 44 years old when they decided to start their activity (see Table 1). Only a small proportion of the respondents (6,3%) was above the age of 60 (in average in the 36 municipalities this proportion is 17,5%, CBS 2010a), indicating that not many retirees decided to start a side activity. This could indicate that these activities are not just a matter of filling-up the free time of the individuals but that there are other reasons. Concerning gender, 61 per cent of the side activities have female principal owners. This relatively high percentage of women is in line with previous empirical evidence showing that women are more prone to start a small home-based business as they can combine it with domestic duties, and finding a 'work-life balance' (Still & Timms 2000). Especially in rural areas, the traditional division of labour still places most of the household and family management on women's shoulders either on farm (Anthopoulou 2010) or on non-farm households (Walker & Webster 2004).

Concerning education levels, the respondents are relatively highly educated (30%) in comparison with the working population in the 36 municipalities (16-65 years-old, 23,1%)[10] (data calculated from Broersma et al. 2010). Another characteristic is their employment status. The results show that 49,8 per cent of the respondents are working (paid employment), 29,6 per cent are staying at home (i.e. housewives, househusbands) while their partner brings in the main income for the household and a small proportion receives social security benefits or has a pension. Compared to the labour gross participation rates (people who are working or looking for a job) in the research areas, this is 69,7 per cent, which is higher from the respondents of this study (and negative in relation with the Netherlands, -7,92) (CBS 2008b).[11]

[9] Although the focus of this research is on non-farmers, during the fieldwork we also counted the farmer's side activities in the same municipalities as a reference (we did not interview farmers). In total, 269 farmers with side activities were found. So almost half side activities of farmers were reported compared to non-farmers.

[10] Education level of the Dutch working population in the 36 municipalities: primary (primary and lower secondary school) 26,4%, secondary education (high schools, gymnasiums, lyceums, middle schools, vocational schools and preparatory schools) 50,8% and higher education (universities and professional colleges) 23,1% (Broersma et al. 2010).

[11] Many respondents (65,5%) did not live in an urban center in the past (last ten years), implying that many side activity initiators did not move from a city to rural areas to start a side activity. The desirability to start a side

We now turn to the main characteristics of the household. Examining the household composition, 48,2 per cent of the respondents are married/in partnership without kids. Single parents and singles form the smaller group of people who have side activities. The results are not so different from the average of the municipalities where 35 per cent are married/in partnership without kids (CBS 2010b).

The respondents were also asked to indicate the annual net household income (i.e. the net income of all working household members, excluding income from the side activity) (Table 1). 45 Per cent earn between 20-40,000 euro's which is similar to the average annual household income in the research areas (30,650 euro's) (CBS 2008a). Table 1 also shows the distribution of the side activities' income. It seems that only a small group (7,2%) earns more than 15,000 euro's per year from the side activity, indicating the economic importance for some households.

activity do not seem to function as a motive to move to rural areas. This was also proved in a deepening research in two Dutch municipalities (Aa en Hunze and Borger-Odoorn). Just for two respondents (total 25) the side activity functioned as an incentive to move to the rural.

Table 1
Respondents characteristics (n=260)

In relation to the individual	Count	Valid % of total responses	In relation to the household	Count	Valid % of total responses
Age at the start-up			*Marital status*		
Less than 30 years	47	18,5	Single no kids	21	8,2
30-44 years	103	40,6	Single with kids	5	1,9
45-59 years	88	34,6	Married/partnership, no kids	124	48,2
60 years or more	16	6,3	Married/partnership with kids	107	41,6
Gender			*Number of kids*		
Male	101	39,0	none	150	57,7
Female	158	61,0	1 kid	31	11,9
			2 kids	44	16,9
			3 or more kids	35	13,5
Education levels			*Annual household net income*[a] *(euro's)*		
Primary	24	9,4	<10,000	6	5,3
Secondary	155	60,0	10-20,000	26	23,0
Higher	79	30,6	20-40,000	51	45,1
			>40,000	30	26,5
Employed or not?			*Annual side activities' net income*[b] *(euro's)*		
Paid employed	128	49,8	<1,000	45	32,4
Housewife/husband	76	29,6	1-5,000	38	27,3
Pension	20	7,8	5-15,000	46	33,1
Social security benefits	33	12,8	>15,000	10	7,2

[a] *43,5% of the respondents filled-in the annual household income question.*
[b] *53,5% of the respondents filled-in the annual side activities income.*

4.5 Analysis and results

4.5.1 Start-up motives

The analysis of the results was done in two steps. Firstly, we asked the respondents to indicate their start-up motives with an open and secondly with a close-ended question. In the open question we asked them, *what was the main motive to start your side activity?* (see Table 2). The category that collects the most responses (47,7%) is the self-interest of the respondent in the activity. That means that people either start a side activity because they enjoy it and like it as an idea (e.g. mini camp site, bed and breakfast, tea-garden), or because they want to express their talents and passions (e.g. glass-atelier, paintings workshops, mini-planetarium), or even because they like to work outside in the garden (e.g. apiculture, fruit-garden) or with animals (e.g. horse riding school, dog's hotel, dog's grooming salon). These motives are personal in nature implying that the respondents reflected upon their personal aspirations as their main motive to start a side activity rather upon the household needs.

Similar motives are also reported in supplementary activities of farmers. For example the study of Hendriksen and Klaver (1995) found that farmers are starting a supplementary activity for fun or because it is exciting. More specific motives reported in agri-tourism entrepreneurship also from farmers, showed that the search for an appealing lifestyle or as an interest and hobby played also an important role (McGehee & Kim 2004). The results are also consistent with the study of Gomez Velasco and Saleilles (2007) on lifestyle entrepreneurs in France, where the main motive to start a small business is to live in the countryside and to have time for self-interest projects and combine it with their hobbies, concluding that the self-interest is important as a start-up motive.

Table 2
What was your main motive to start your side activity?
(categories from open-ended question, n=260)

Categories	Valid % of total responses
Self-interest/hobby	**47,7**
Earn an extra income	**16,2**
Available land/space	**7,7**
Unemployment/out of need	5,4
Work from home/childcare	4,2
Be the boss of my own	4,2
Social contacts	3,1
Environment/surroundings	2,3
Challenge	1,9
Need for the product/market	1,5
Overproduction	1,2
Other	3,1

As far as economic rewards are concerned, these come secondary with 16,2 per cent. Although financial considerations are less important, some responses illustrate their 'additional' economic value, for example, 'it is nice to have an additional income' or 'it is something extra, next to my job'. Economic motive is not excluded as a trigger to start a secondary activity.

Studies either on farmers or non-farmers are not consistent as far as economic motives are concerned. For example, the study of Nickerson et al. (2001) in agritourism (farmers) shows that to earn an additional income is the main motive among farm households in Montana while the motive self-interest/hobby does not play an important role there. On the other hand, studies on small businesses (non farmers) show little inclination on making a profit (see Greenback 2001; Van Gelderen & Jansen 2006) and even less for lifestyle entrepreneurs (Komppula 2004). So it seems from various studies that people with different backgrounds (farmer, small business owner, side activity owner) are influenced differently for the start-up decision.

A possible reason for this differentiation could be that side activities by definition do not provide a main income but only add to the household income. Furthermore, we have to emphasize that the respondents seem to be in the fortunate position of economic security. Some of them have a full-time working partner, or have their own jobs besides the side activity or they have income from social security benefits or pension. Thus they do not have to make a living from it (as it is the case for farmers or for small business owners). After all, as noted earlier

(Table 1), the additional income earned from side activities is rather small for the majority of the households.

The third category of motives is the availability of physical space and/or land (7,7%). The respondents either had a big garden (mini campsite or tea-garden), a barn (vacation apartment), an extra room in the house (pedicure salon) or use the garage (glass atelier) for practicing their side activity. It could be argued that the availability of space was seen by the respondents as an opportunity to initiate a side activity, it is an enabling factor. This is consistent with what Alsos et al. (2003) are describing over the resource-based entrepreneurs (farmers) who utilize their own available resources to start a new business on their farm.

The other categories of motives constitute a smaller group and besides unemployment/out of need (e.g. sickness) which functions we could say as a push factor, the rest are non-economic in nature and have a pulling effect. For example, be the boss of my own, to have social contacts, for the challenge, work from home/combine it with childcare, these are motives which are not directly connected to economic rewards but are situated more in the personal and less in the household sphere. These results are consistent with motives in small-business literature. For example, the study of Greenback (2001) shows that the vast majority of the respondents indicated little inclination to maximize profit. Personal non-economic objectives such as independence, flexibility, control were more important. Motives related to household, i.e. to balance work-family, childcare, appear less prominent (see Atterton & Affleck 2010).

On the second step, in order to get a deeper understanding on the start-up motives, the respondents were further asked the close-ended question – *to what extent did the following aspects play a role to start your side activity?* Respondents rated each question on a five-point Likert-type scale, ranging from 1= 'To no extent' to 5= 'To a very great extent' on each of 17 different types of motives (see Table 3). A closer look at the data shows that the standard deviations are relatively high, indicating that the distribution is skewed. To check for that we also present the median where we observe that there are not severe differences.

Table 3
To what extent did the following aspects play a role to start your side activity? (n=260)

Motives	1 To no extent (valid % of responses)	2	3	4	5 To a very great extent (valid % of responses)	Median	Mean	SD
Because of self-interest/hobby	16,7	3,5	7,4	18,2	54,3	5	3,90	1,50
Challenge	19,9	4,7	11,3	21,1	43,0	4	3,63	1,55
Be the boss on my own	31,1	10,1	5,1	11,3	42,4	4	3,24	1,76
Fits to the rural lifestyle	29,0	7,8	12,5	19,2	31,4	4	3,16	1,63
Availability of own resources	27,5	7,8	16,5	18,0	30,2	3	3,16	1,59
Quality of life	27,5	8,2	16,1	21,2	27,1	3	3,12	1,57
Develop a personal idea/dream	30,2	8,9	13,2	17,1	30,6	3	3,09	1,64
Extra income	34,5	11,6	12,8	12,0	29,1	3	2,90	1,67
Personal growth	37,0	7,0	15,2	20,6	20,2	3	2,80	1,59
Contribute to society	35,0	10,5	17,9	17,9	18,7	3	2,75	1,54
Social contacts	40,4	5,9	18,4	15,7	19,6	3	2,68	1,59
Flexibility for personal/ family life	51,8	6,7	9,8	12,9	18,8	1	2,40	1,63
Discover a gap in the market	49,0	8,9	15,2	11,7	15,2	2	2,35	1,54
Because others were successful	73,3	7,8	9,4	4,3	5,1	1	1,60	1,14
Dissatisfaction over paid job	76,5	5,9	9,0	3,9	4,7	1	1,55	1,11
Family tradition	82,4	3,5	2,7	6,7	4,7	1	1,48	1,13
Because of unemployment	85,9	5,1	3,5	1,6	3,9	1	1,32	0,92

The analysis of the data shows that the motive with the highest mean score (3.9) and median (5) is to start a side activity because of self-interest/hobby. This coincides with the main motive from the open question presented earlier, indicating consistency of the respondents' most important answers. The challenge the activity offers (mean=3.63), being the boss of my own (mean=3.24), and motives related to rural lifestyle (mean=3.16) follow in importance. Furthermore, quality of life and to develop a dream were also considered to play an important role to start a side activity and these scored, based on the mean scores, higher than pecuniary rewards. All these are related to personal development implying that the respondents were reflecting again his/her personal needs rather than household needs. Motives more closely related to the household such as flexibility to personal and family life, were not specifically emphasized.

Also from the results it is clear that economic rewards are in general not the main reasons why people start a side activity. It is worth mentioning, that when respondents had to choose between different motivational types (close-ended question), income became even less important than in the open question. Two can be the main reasons for that. Firstly, it suggests that people realized that non-economic motives actually played a more important role to start their side activity than financial motives. Secondly, the answers may measure the same type of motives. For example, the self-interest motive can collapse into more components, such as, challenge, quality of life or develop a dream.

Because the 17 motives from the close-ended question may share the same information, we wanted to see whether these could be further grouped. This could assist us with interpreting the above start-up motives of the side activities. In order to achieve that, a principal component analysis (PCA) was conducted to identify possible underlying patterns. Prior to performing the PCA, the suitability of data for factor analysis was assessed. Inspection of the correlation matrix revealed the presence of many coefficients of .3 and above. The Kaiser-Meyre-Olkin Measure was .786, exceeding the recommended value of .6 and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity reached statistical significance, supporting the factorability of the correlation matrix. Reliability analysis (Cronbach's alpha) produced coefficients higher than .5 (minimum value expected) indicating the internal consistency among the variables comprising each of the factors. The overall reliability measure was .782.

The PCA resulted in five factors (eigenvalues >1) accounting for the 56,00 per cent of the variance. An inspection of the scree plot graph revealed a clear break after the third component. Although the total variance explained retaining four and five factors was 49,56 and 56,00 per cent respectively, however, retaining these factors, interpretations could not be made about them, thus, it was decided to retain three components for further examination (eigenvalues >1, and factor loadings over .5). The three-component solution explained a total

of 42,94 per cent of the variance with component 1 contributing 24 per cent, component 2, 10,76 per cent and component 3, 8,18 per cent (Table 4).

Each of the three factors was assigned a label based on the nature of the motives on each of the factors. The factors were labeled as follows: F1) *Internal aspirations and pursuits*, F2) *Economic wellbeing and independence*, F3) *Rurality and lifestyle*. Table 5 displays the factors and the different motives that are loaded on each factor.

The first factor is derived by five individual motives (>.5). More specifically, motives related to the individual such as to develop a personal idea or a dream, to develop and grow as a person, to achieve quality of life. Furthermore, motives such as, to meet a challenge and because of hobby and self-interest also score high in this factor. All these are related to the individual and his/her aspirations and pursuits. Thereby, this first factor is personal in nature, not specifically reflecting on household needs. We label this factor as *internal aspirations and pursuits* (F1), explaining 24,00 per cent of variance in the data and with an eigenvalue of 4.08.

In the second factor, four motives are loaded, explaining 10,76 per cent of the total variance in the data and with an eigenvalue of 1.83. The most important motives on this factor are, to earn an extra income, because of dissatisfaction over the paid job and, moreover, to be the boss on my own (independence) and because starting a side activity at the household provided flexibility to personal and family life. As these are associated with economic considerations and the need for independence, we labeled the second factor as *economic wellbeing and independence* (F2).

The last factor includes two types of motives, namely, people start a side activity because it fits to their rural lifestyle and because they have the available resources while living in the countryside (e.g. land/space). This clearly suggests that this factor is associated with the fact that people live in rural areas and we labeled it *rurality and lifestyle* factor (F3) explaining 8,18 per cent of variance and with eigenvalue of 1.39.

Table 4
Principal component analysis of side activities' motives (eigenvalues>1)

Components	Rotation sums of squared loadings		
	Eigenvalues	% of Variance	Cumulative %
(F1) Individual aspirations and pursuits	4,08	24,00	24,00
(F2) Economic wellbeing and independence	1,83	10,76	34,76
(F3) Rurality and lifestyle	1,39	8,18	42,94

Table 5
Principal component analysis of start-up motives, rotated component matrix

Motives	Component 1 Individual aspirations and pursuits	Component 2 Economic wellbeing and independence	Component 3 Rurality and lifestyle
Develop an idea/dream	**.761**	.227	.036
Personal growth	**.744**	.186	.038
Challenge	**.723**	.299	.115
Quality of life	**.584**	.175	.383
Hobby/interest	**.553**	-.260	.087
Social contacts	.338	-.124	.028
Contribute to society	.315	.147	.358
Be the boss on my own	.307	**.732**	.145
Availability of own resources	.296	-.064	**.714**
Discover a gap in the market	.272	.390	.441
Fits to the rural lifestyle	.212	-.165	**.708**
Dissatisfaction over paid job	.150	**.569**	-.111
Flexibility for personal/ family life	.126	**.605**	.182
Others were successful	.002	.173	.451
Because of unemployment	-.062	.376	.003
Extra income	-.151	**.681**	.222
Family tradition	-.183	.110	.428

Bold items indicate loadings for each item. Cutting point is .5

In summary, the factor analysis grouped the start-up motives into three main types, namely, individual aspirations, economic rewards and independence, and rural lifestyle considerations. In other words, side activity proprietors pursue a number of monetary (F2) and non-monetary motives (F1, F3) to start-up their activity. Motives related to the factors 1 and 2 are often reported in literature either in the case of farmers or of non-farmers entrepreneurs. The factor

related to rurality and lifestyle is more of a recent recognised phenomenon. For example, for farmers with secondary activities, the issue of rural living seems to gain more importance lately as Primdahl et al. (2010) argue. In particular, for lifestyle entrepreneurs who locate their business in rural areas, motivations for location choice (to live in the countryside) seem to play an important role as well (see Gomez Velasco & Saleilles 2007). In that sense, non-farmers with side activities seem to share the same type of 'rural-lifestyle' start-up motives.

4.6 Conclusions, limitations and recommendations

This article casts light on the motives of non-farmers to start-up a side activity in rural areas in the Netherlands. The results indicated that three main types of motives play a role to start a side activity, namely: 1) *individual aspirations and pursuits*, 2) *economic wellbeing and independence* and 3) *rurality and lifestyle*. This suggests that side activities should not only be primarily evaluated in economic terms but also for its non-economic values that corresponds to the individuals needs and desires.

More specifically, examining the ordering of motives it is found that side activity proprietors seem to be inclined to non-economic benefits and only secondarily for economic gains. Non-economic reasons, such as self-interest of the individual in the activity, rural lifestyle and quality of life seem to be more important. The results from this study coincides with the ordering of the motives found in various studies either in the context of farmers' pluriactivity or in the small business context and more specific in rural entrepreneurship and agri-tourism firms as argued earlier.

Side activities seem to differ from the classical small business pursuit. Having said that, side activity owners do not have to make a living from the activity as it is the case for farmers of for the small business owners. This non-economic direction further suggests that people may not be growth oriented implying that they may not transform their side activity into a main activity in the future.

However, there are also cases where individuals take economic motives into consideration when starting side activities. This could have future implications on the potential growth of these activities, implying that the need for financial betterment may move people to grow their side activities into main activities standing as their main source of income. Furthermore, if some of these activities grow, this could be important for policies concerning their spatial effects on rural areas. However, further analysis is required to examine in detail their growth potentials (see Markantoni et al. forthcoming).

There are also some implications for policy makers in the area of rural small business and rural entrepreneurship. Although mainstream rural policies do not take rural side activities by non-farmers into account, policy makers and local action groups should know about what

motivates people to start such activities. Furthermore, economic development agencies may come to recognize the specific motivations in starting side activities and realize the goals and needs of this group. The fact that people start side activities mainly for non-economic reasons could change the policy agendas, targeting not only on economic but also personal and intangible incentives to facilitate side activities carried out from the rural. For example, by promoting trainings aimed at developing specific entrepreneurial skills.

As noted earlier, this study measured start-up motives of the household member who is most involved in the side activity. Although side activities is a phenomenon happening at the household, this study found that start-up motives do not reflect directly to the household needs but personal motives appeared more prominent. This was also the limitation of this study as the role of the household and the other household members to the decision making process of the start-up was not explicitly analysed and this merits further examination.

Furthermore, as the objective was to get an overview of motives, this study is not focused on a specific geographical area. This implies that the results cannot be used to interpret the motives to a particular situational and geographical context (e.g. unemployment in the region, characteristics of rural areas, remoteness). What characterise though the research area is the relatively high urbanised countryside of the Netherlands implying that cities are accessible from rural areas easier than in other rural parts in Europe. This could suggest that rural residents do not have to find a job in the rural as urban regions are easily reachable. The latter may influence the start-up motives, for example, to be less economic oriented.

This article has sought to examine the start-up motives of non-farmers' side activities. However, further and more detailed research is required to build on the findings exploring the life-cycle of the individual and the household in relation to the different types of motives, possibly by adopting a qualitative approach. This article has taken one step towards this end. It has shown that side activity owners are characterized by their personal non-economic incentives than just financial betterment.

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5 Bringing ‘invisible’ side activities to light
A case study of rural female entrepreneurs in the Veenkoloniën

5 Bringing 'invisible' side activities to light. A case study of rural female entrepreneurs in the Veenkoloniën[1]

Abstract

In the past 20 years, rural areas in Western societies have transformed from a production to a consumption space. Much research on rural diversification and revitalization has focused on farmers. It is useful thus to bring side activities by non-farm women into the light that have slowly but relatively invisibly emerged in the last few years. In light of discussions about rural decline, such activities should be valued more than they perhaps are at present. Although they may not matter in terms of defeating unemployment figures, they hold the potential to provide the social and emotional 'glue' that will motivate the household to remain in declining areas as small-scale economic activities contribute to a better quality of life and a higher level of well-being. In this article, we draw on personal stories of side activity owners, in the Veenkoloniën. We explore organizational and emotional struggles related to conducting these activities within the space of their home and we highlight the importance of side activities for the socio-economic development of rural communities.

5.1 Introduction

In the past 20 years, rural areas in Western societies have undergone many changes as a result of socioeconomic restructuring. The increasing demands by society for rural areas to provide tourism and recreation opportunities, quality and regional food production has transformed the countryside from a (predominantly) production to a (predominantly) consumption place (Halfacree 2006; Slee 2005). As a result, the countryside has become a multifunctional space for leisure, recreation, working and living (EC 2007; Marsden 1999).

Although rural areas in the Netherlands are still dominated by agricultural land use, in general the above developments are mirrored here as well (SER 2005; Steenbekkers et al. 2008).[2] In terms of land use, there has been a steady decrease in areas designated for agriculture from the mid-1990s onwards. It is expected that agricultural land use will continue to decrease by another four percent by 2035 in order to be converted to nature and recreation areas and to provide new land for more housing (Steenbekkers et al. 2008). The Dutch population seems to view these developments with a sense of pragmatism. Although they

[1] This chapter is reprinted from Markantoni, M. & B. Van Hoven. Bringing 'invisible' side activities to light. A case study of rural female entrepreneurs in the Veenkoloniën and has been submitted to an international journal.

[2] The vision for the Agenda for a Living Countryside (LNV 2004, p. 3) by the Dutch Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality emphasizes that 'the countryside of the future will not just reflect the activity of farmers and other rural dwellers, it will reflect the activities and needs of all Dutch people'.

object to urbanization and the emergence of industrial zones, a key concern is that the spacious landscape and its quietness are preserved. These characteristics are reflected in the regional identities of rural inhabitants as well as visions for rural revitalization which require the preservation of a region's rural identity in its social and 'morphological sense' (Steenbekkers et al. 2008, p. 13). In terms of the emergence of new rural activities, for example, this implies that they should not alter 'rural morphology'. An important question then is how rural areas can be revitalized in order to provide economically and socially viable living environments whilst keeping their visual qualities intact. It is likely that at least some endeavors will focus on the small(est) scale of activity which is either relatively unobtrusive and/ or enhances rural qualities.

With regards to the diversification of rural areas, it is useful to bring those small-scale activities into the light that have slowly but relatively invisibly emerged in the last few years. In light of discussions about rural decline (Haartsen & Venhorst 2010), such activities should be valued more than they perhaps are at present. Although they may not matter in terms of defeating unemployment figures, they hold the potential to provide the social and emotional 'glue' that will motivate the household to remain in declining areas as small-scale economic activities contribute to a better quality of life and a higher level of well-being. In this article then, we explore the so-called side-activities by non-farmers in the northern Netherlands, and specifically the Veenkoloniën. First, we will briefly describe the regional context of the Veenkoloniën, a Dutch rural area in decline, as the geographic setting for the research. In the next section, we define 'side-activities' largely based on previous research in the Netherlands. In our theoretical framework, we situate our research on side-activities within the broader literature on female, rural entrepreneurship in order to highlight similarities and differences. In the remainder of the article, we zoom in on the experiences of our respondents. In particular, we discuss everyday organizational and emotional issues related to side activities in order to highlight the relevance of these activities for rural development.

5.1.1 Veenkoloniën

The Veenkoloniën, a region in the north of the Netherlands, is perceived as one of the most rural and remote areas in the Netherlands (Commissie-Hoekstra 2001; CBS 2009; Strijker 2008) (see Figure 2). It is a former peat reclamation area. Because of the active industrial sector (e.g. peat digging, potato starch, strawboard), the Veenkoloniën has also been characterized as an industrial rural area but one that required significant subsidies by the European Union (Strijker 2008).[3] A report by Hoekstra (2001) on opportunities and barriers to

[3] In the last part of the 19th century Veenkoloniën became a prosperous 'early industrial region' mainly because of the settlement of various new industries, using – for that time – advanced new techniques in the production of potato starch and related chemicals and strawboard. In the second half of the 20th century especially the

rural revitalisation in this area noted that the region suffers from an enduring image as being remote, isolated, monotonous and in decline.

Figure 1. The position of the Veenkoloniën in the northeast of The Netherlands

Despite the government-initiated rural restructuring plan (the *Veenkoloniën Agenda*) to help develop and strengthen the region's identity and to improve the accessibility, living environment and socio-economic development, the area is still facing many socioeconomic problems (Strijker 2008). More specifically, it has above the average unemployment, i.e. 9,1 percent compared with 5,7 percent in the Netherlands.[4] The labour market participation rates for both men and women are lower in comparison to the Netherlands (-3% for men, -4,9% for women) (calculated from CBS 2010). The average net income level per household (28,000

strawboard and potato starch companies faced structural problems and many companies had to close down, characterizing the region as a 'problematic area', with a rural and agricultural rather than an peri-urban and industrial character (Strijker 2008).

[4] Unemployment rates were calculated with combined data from CBS (2009) and the UWV WERKbedrijf (2010), (people looking for a job).

euros) is below the national average (33,000 euros) (CBS 2008). Current problems experienced in the Veenkoloniën may accelerate in the near future as agricultural subsidies to the regions' most important crops are cut (Strijker 2008) and as the region undergoes population decline as well as 'greying' (Haartsen & Venhorst 2010). The Netherlands Bureau for Statistics estimates a population stagnation and a slight decline in the Veenkoloniën of -0,8 percent in the period between 2010-2020 (PBL/CBS 2009).

As noted above, one of the aims of rural revitalization at the national level (and in the Veenkoloniën) is the change in land use designations (Dienst Landelijk Gebied 2007). In addition, as a result of agricultural decline, scale enlargement and farm rationalization, many agricultural enterprises have ceased to exist and agricultural buildings have lost their original function (Daalhuizen et al. 2003). Daalhuizen et al. (2003) note that the emergence of new types of activities has positive effects on rural areas such as the diversification of the rural economy and the creation of employment, thus contributing to the viability of rural areas and the preservation of cultural and historical values. Some of the farmhouses, for example, are converted into bed & breakfasts, care farmsm,[5] art-galleries, or tea-gardens by people conducting side activities.[6]

5.1.2 Side activities

A side activity is a small-scale, home-based economic activity carried out by non-farming households. These activities provide a supplementary income at the household level, they do not constitute a fulltime job,[7] and they do not provide employment for others than their owners. When extra hands are needed, often the family or neighbors support side activities on an unpaid basis. Side activities are usually combined with fulltime or part-time paid employment, and sometimes with a pension. Prime motivations for people setting up side activities are linked to achieving modern lifestyles characterized by individualization and self-realization (Markantoni et al. 2009). In particular in the gender literature, income generating activities have been identified that show some overlap with what we call side activities in this article, in particular *homeworking*.[8]

Oberhauser (1997) and Baylina and Schier (2002), for example, discuss homeworking, and although they define it as an income generating activity supplementing the family home

[5] Care-farms are farms with clients from the care and welfare sector. The main target groups are persons with disabilities, psychiatric background, young and elderly (Hassink 2009).

[6] But side activities are not limited to farm houses, mainly they are established in non-farm houses found in rural areas.

[7] This could imply either seasonal activities or activities conducted during only some hours of a day or week.

[8] Diversifying income opportunities has been a part of rural living possibly for as long as people have been living and working in rural areas (Van der Ploeg & Roep 2003). But a key difference between side activities by rural people (in the 18th and 19th century) and the ones studied in the context of this article, is their current function at the personal level (Markantoni et al. 2009).

income, as is the case for side activities, they note that it is a necessary part of the household income. Oberhauser (1995) asserts that homeworking is crucial for the household survival strategies in rural areas, whereas in the case of side activities as discussed in this article, income plays a secondary role. Side activity owners often obtain another type of reward related to self-realization, personal growth and to support a lifestyle (Markantoni et al. 2009). Last but not least, there is another notable difference between homeworking and side activities, namely their socio-economic and geographic context. Household survival strategies that utilize homeworking are often adopted in constrained environments (e.g. remote rural areas, high unemployment, poverty; see Oberhauser 1995, 1997), whilst side activities in the Netherlands are often situated in a context where people are more economically secure.

In the Netherlands, Markantoni et al. (2009) mapped the distribution of side-activities using a survey in 36 rural municipalities. They found 260 side activities which could be categorized as follows: tourism and recreation (40%), services and facilities provision (23%), craft and arts (6%), sale of home-grown products (31%). A key outcome was that the majority of side activities (61%) are initiated by women.[9] In the research area for this paper, the Veenkoloniën, 63 percent of tourism and recreation side activities were initiated by women, as well as 71 percent of activities providing services and facilities and 68 percent of craft and arts activities. Men are slightly more active in the sale of home-grown products (54%).

Thus far, side activities by non-farmers have received scant attention in both literature on rural entrepreneurship and policy.[10] It is conceivable that a key reason for this absence is simply the relative invisibility of side activities in research due to their small scale and their perceived low economic potential in renewing rural areas. However, it is quite likely, that they simply did not catch researchers' attention because they are literally invisible[11]. For example, in the Netherlands, side activities that are registered at the Chamber of Commerce and other professional organizations, are categorized under 'businesses'.

In light of the lack of literature specifically addressing side-activities by non-farmers, as noted above, we situate our research within the broader literature on female, rural entrepreneurship.

[9] Women owners of side activities in the Netherlands: tourism and recreation (51,5%), services and facilities provision (71%), craft and arts (64,7%), sale of home-grown products (64%).

[10] Atterton and Affleck (2010), for example, note that 44 percent of rural small business owners had a secondary activity but provide no further discussion of these 'secondary activities'.

[11] In the wider study on side activities from which this article draws, it was necessary to physically go out into rural areas and search for them. In order to achieve this, we recruited students as research assistants.

5.2 Rural women and entrepreneurship

In recent years, a body of literature has emerged discussing different aspects of rural farm women's lives in (Western European) rural areas. Rural women are increasingly becoming 'pioneers' in new activities in rural areas (Anthopoulou 2010; Kloeze 1999). These activities concern a diversification of income-generating activities on the farm, such as agri-tourism (McGehee et al. 2006), food processing, artisanal products and local agrofood production (Anthopoulou 2010). But Bock (2004), for example, also noted an increasing participation in the off-farm labour market. Many entrepreneurial activities, especially those related to rural tourism, are attractive for rural women as the tasks required (e.g. food processing, hosting visitors and catering them) are compatible with their household tasks (see Anthopoulou 2010; Garcia-Ramon et al. 1995; McGehee et al. 2006). For that reason, women's entrepreneurial activities are often perceived as gendered (Bock 2004; Whatmore et al. 1994). It is important to note then that the initiation of small-scale entrepreneurial activities by farm women has, in fact, oftentimes been empowering, removing women from the shadow of their 'farmer' husband. The old image of farm women as farm helpmate-wife-mother, subservient to the economic work of men (Poiner 1994) is thus being challenged, recognizing women's dynamic role in local (socio-economic) development (Allen et al. 2008; Bock 1999; O'Toole & Macgarvey 2003).

Although in general, rural areas hold little appeal as a stage to start-up a business for non-farmers,[12] and this is certainly the case for the study area of the Veenkoloniën, there are rural regions which are characterized by a plethora of small businesses especially related to the service, craft enterprises, caring services and agrofood sector initiated mainly by women entrepreneurs (EC 2000; Oberhauser 1997). Rural transformations (see Steenbekkers et al. 2006; Woods 2005),[13] as noted above, have opened up many opportunities for non-farm women, many of them urban newcomers, to start up small-scale businesses, often in the direct vicinity of their rural home (see for example, Atterton & Affleck 2010; Baines & Wheelock 2000; Tigges & Green 1994).

The European literature highlights that women start a business as an integral part of their lives, identities and everyday lifestyles and not as much for economic reasons as men do (see, for example, Baines & Wheelock 2000; DeMartino & Barbato 2003; Driga et al. 2009; Egan 1997; Still & Timms 2000). Brush (1992) stated that when a woman starts a business she does

[12] Mainly because the 'rural' has been portrayed as backward and peripheral (Patterson & Anderson 2003) but also because of structural, social and institutional problems (Anthopoulou 2010).

[13] These changes are not happening with the same intensity to all rural regions. Regional dynamics, population decline, entrepreneurial dynamics and global forces, all interplay to shape the economic development of rural regions.

not create an isolated economic entity, she is creating a business integrated into her everyday life. However, female entrepreneurs in rural areas face more barriers than men (i.e. ideological, cultural, prejudices regarding the stereotypical role of the (male) entrepreneur, occupational segregation). Several authors suggest (see, for example, Buttner & Rosen 1989; Coleman 2000) that women entrepreneurs, in contrast to men, have greater difficulty securing bank loans to start up their businesses because they are perceived as less successful compared with men and because of their domestic responsibilities.[14] Nevertheless, they manage to be at the forefront of rural development, contributing to viable rural communities by engaging in small businesses (Braithwaite 1994; Driga et al. 2009).[15] Many women have difficulties finding a job that can be combined with family obligations particularly in rural areas (Loscocco & Leicht 1993; Oberhauser 1995). Similarly to farm women, non-farm women utilize the opportunity to initiate a small-scale home-based business without large investments and manage to balance their home-work life in areas with fewer childcare services and longer routes to paid employment (Baines & Wheelock 2000; Oberhauser 1995, 1997). Baylina and Schier (2002) have thus concluded that working from home can be a way of empowerment, making women less (economic) depended on their husband and, as Oberhauser (1997) noted earlier, gaining intangible benefits, such as self-esteem and confidence.

In spite of the above indications, much research on entrepreneurs has ignored the spatial unit of the household as a stage for the small business (Aldrich & Cliff 2003). Oberhauser (1995, p. 51) argues that conventional economic analyses 'largely neglect the dynamic role of gender and household income-generating strategies and instead view the domestic sphere as a homogeneous and harmonious unit of social reproduction'. This can be explained, at least in part, by the predominant perception of entrepreneurship by researchers as a male domain (Ahl 2006) which is dominated by production not reproduction. However, women entrepreneurs often combine domestic duties, childcare and work by mingling home spaces so they become mixed spaces, making their home available for productive and reproductive work.

In our research, we have specifically tried to draw out what these organizational and emotional struggles at the level of the home entail and how they are resolved. Ultimately, we seek to explore what women gain from taking these multiple tasks and give up a part of their

[14] However, even though women's business plans are more moderate compared with men, they are more likely to see their plan succeed (Buttner & Rosen 1989).

[15] Having said this, the report of the European Commission, *Women active in rural development* (EC 2000, p. 13) recognizes that 'women often have the added advantage of an awareness and knowledge of local needs and special interpersonal and communicational skills' in comparison with male entrepreneurs.

homes. Before discussing women's experiences, we briefly outline the research approach in the following section.

5.3 Researching side activities in the Veenkoloniën

This article draws on a broader study on side activities in the Netherlands comprised of two phases. The first phase of the study, aimed at gaining preliminary information about background characteristics of the respondents and their side activities, start-up motivations, future perspectives, and location choice (see Markantoni et al. 2009, 2010). As noted above, a key outcome was that the majority of side activities are initiated and/or operated by women (Markantoni et al. 2010). However, the project stopped short of exploring the gendered dimension of side activities. And even though the home as location for the business comprised a part of the definition of the concept, the significance of this spatial unit remained underexplored. For that reason, a small-scale qualitative study was conducted which provides more depth with regards to motivations for starting side-activities, everyday organizational issues as well as struggles and satisfaction resulting from operating side activities.

In this second phase of the study, we selected one rural region, the Veenkoloniën. In the Veenkoloniën, 94 side activities were reported in the context of the survey. Of these, 33 percent were categorized in the service sector, 35 percent in the touristic sector, 30 percent in home-grown products and 14 percent in craft and arts. The 94 side activities were initiated by 49 women, 30 men and 15 couples. In order to collect data, in-depth interviews were held with seventeen respondents who own and run side activities in the Veenkoloniën. Each interview lasted approximately one and half hour, was taped-recorded, transcribed and coded. Figure 2. summarizes the main themes that were discussed during the interviews.

Figure 2. Overview of research themes during the interviews

Original idea and motives for starting up
Daily tasks pertaining to the side activity and combination with household tasks
Decision making process
Lifecycle of the side activity
Unexpected problems and pleasant experiences
Influence of the rural area for the start-up
Meaning of the side activity to the customers/ local community /region
Future wishes

For the purpose of the in-depth research, we selected the categories 'services' and 'tourism' as they require more commitment, input and are more labour intensive in terms of planning, finance, social and human capital than home-grown products for example. The recruitment of respondents drew on the database which contained address details and phone numbers per side activity. We first contacted potential respondents via telephone, explaining the purpose of the study and asking permission for an interview. Of the 33 people approached for an interview, 18 refused to participate, stating that they felt their activity was too small to be subject to this study, they were not interested, or they had no time. Four people mentioned health related reasons as a deterrent to participating in the research. In order to recruit further respondents, we also used a snowball technique, asking respondents if they could recommend someone with a side activity who might be willing to participate in the research. In so doing, four more respondents were recruited. As a result of above efforts, our sample was composed of ten women, three men and two couples. Table 1 summarizes key characteristics of the respondents.

With regards to the type of side activities, the sample includes almost half from within the tourism sector (e.g. bed & breakfast, group accommodation, mini-camping, canoe rental), six include services (e.g. pedicure, dog's grooming salon, care farm, small shops), and four combine tourism and services (e.g. tea-garden). We want to emphasize here that the term 'side activities' was coined by researchers, not respondents. It is important then to reiterate that although the term *side* activity suggests an activity of minor importance, this is not the case for those starting up and running these enterprises. For them, side activities often comprise an important part of their everyday lives and identities.

Table 1. Profile of the respondents and the side activities (shorted by length of side activity)

Respondent	Age respondent	Marital status	Type of side activity	Sector	Length side activity (years)
Raymond	40	Married with 3 dependent kids	Group accommodation	Tourism	<3
Magreet and Viktor	38 and 42	Married with 1 kid	Mini-camping	Tourism	<3
Mirjam and Dirk	49 both	Married with 1 kid	Vacation apartments	Tourism	<3
Henk	40	Married with 2 dependent kids	Tea garden	Tourism/ Services	<3
Anja	40	Married without kids	Care farm	Services	<3
Sylke	39	Single with 2 dependent kids	Canoe rental/ Bed&Breakfast	Tourism	3-5
Heleen	44	In partnership without kids	Garden decorations	Services	3-5
Wilma	51	Married with 2 kids	Tea garden/plants	Tourism/ Services	5-10
Jan	42	Single without kids	Tea garden/ Sell own plants	Tourism/ Services	5-10
Jenny	41	Married with 2 dependent kids	Pedicure salon	Services	5-10
Carin	49	Married without kids	Glass atelier	Services/Art	5-10
Femke	49	Married with 1 dependent kid	Furniture shop/ Tea garden	Services/ Tourism	5-10
Nora	46	Married with 2 dependent kids	Pick your own fruit	Produce, sell products/ Tourism	5-10
Hanneke	56	In partnership without kids	Dog's grooming salon	Services	>10
Bea	60	Married with 2 kids	Group accommodation	Tourism	>10

5.4 Making space for side activities

In the following section, we explore factors mentioned by respondents that enabled them to start up their side activities, i.e. landscape features, their homes, the family context and household circumstances. The discussion highlights that starting up their side activities was a part of an important life transition, often in both their geographic and personal context. Although the side activities are income generating, most women gain motivation and satisfaction from non-monetary values and emotional benefits.

The Veenkoloniën is perceived as an area in decline facing many socio-economic problems, rather than a popular and attractive residential area (see Bijker & Haartsen 2010). Nevertheless, slightly more than half of the respondents (ten) moved to the rural Veenkoloniën (during the past nine years). This area provided space (e.g. big house, big garden), quietness, rurality, in some cases the vicinity of friends and family, but also relatively low house prices when compared with other regions in the Netherlands. Many of the respondents only realized the opportunities that this new space afforded them after they moved, and they converted available space into business locations. These experience mirror findings from previous, quantitative research which concluded that people do not usually move to a specific region with the intention to start a side activity (Markantoni et al. 2009). For example, Sylke used the canal in front of her house for canoe rentals, Magreet and Viktor had a vast property which allowed for starting a mini-camping, and Miriam and Dirk had an unused barn to use for a vacation apartment. However, several activities are sufficiently small-scale to be conducted within the family home. For example, Wilma turned a part of the house into a small café with adjoining plant nursery, Hanneke converted a spare room into a dog grooming salon and small shop for selling precious stones, while Anja extend her kitchen to a multifunctional space for kids to have lunch when they visit her care farm. A side effect of the availability of space at home was the lack of necessary financial investments, and associated risks, that would have been required for starting up a business at an assigned 'business location'. Although the respondents might not have moved to this area if they could have afforded a more expensive house elsewhere, they converted the regional disadvantage to a personal advantage by starting a side activity.

Reinterpreting the region as one that offers exciting opportunities and new directions is, for many respondents, a broader process which includes transitions in other aspects of their lives. Aldrich and Cliff, in 2003, emphasized that is indispensable to understand the role of life transitions in relation to business formation. Indeed for many of our respondents, too, the motivation to start a side activity coincided with a major life transition. In our research, respondents named significant changes in their marriage (i.e. divorce), a period of prolonged

poor health, or a way of coping with desolation, for example as a result of infertility. In each of these cases, a negative experience was (eventually) turned into an opportunity to give new directions to their lives, realizing ideas that might have been suppressed by a partner, exploring opportunities that match their physical limitations (Hanneke and Magreet), or rechanneling emotions that were initially reserved for one's own family (Anja).

For half of our respondents, this transition was becoming a parent. For rural households, parenthood comes with additional challenges such as lack of available or geographically close childcare, longer routes to the place of work, shops and other services, longer distances to school, school friends and extracurricular activities- all to be combined into everyday routines. In several households, parents (re-)arranged their respective roles in such a way, that parenthood implied the adoption of a traditional breadwinner model with the male continuing to work and the female resigning (or not seeking employment actively). The division of household tasks, childcare and paid work suggests a reinforcement of traditional gender roles especially in the rural context (see also Little & Panelli 2003; Still & Timms 2000). However, it is perhaps important, too, to emphasise that this solution to organizing family and work life is experienced by many women as an opportunity to be more flexible, to have more control over their daily agendas, and to work in a job they like in a location they like. Jenny, for example, (41 years, married with two kids, owner of a pedicure salon) explained:

> At first, it was actually the combination [of work and household tasks] for the kids. So I could be at home when they came home. That was the most important. Regarding the family then, in order to manage family life without external help from others, childcare, after school care, I experience this [combination] as very pleasant …I can combine my side activity with their school timetable.

We wish to emphasise that although our focus in this article is on women, the men we interviewed also named parenthood as key motivation to rethink their lives and explore ways of organizing care duties in combination with paid employment. In particular, fathers of very young children appreciated the side activity for its potential to allow a combination of both.

The respondents above all emphasise the availability of space in the direct vicinity of their homes (and on their own property) as convenient for providing a space for their business. Most respondents imply that a combination of home space with business space was attractive because it helped them address many organizational problems otherwise incurred when trying to combine household and care tasks with paid work. Nevertheless and in spite of the advantages and benefits associated with a home-based income-generating activity, some women also experienced this situation as ambiguous. A potential problem was the continuous availability of women to both family members and potential customers or clients. Although

some women allocated their work to separate spaces in the house with a door to close (e.g. garage, barn, separated room), other respondents found it difficult to establish rigorous boundaries (both mental and physical) between home life and business life. Wilma illustrates:

> If you have it [side activity] at home you make a lot more hours, because you walk into your business and you think let me do a bit of this and a bit of that. If you do not have it [side activity] at home then the difference is much bigger.

A few respondents deliberately or 'accidentally' mingled the designation of home spaces, creating mixed spaces (see also, Oberhauser 1997). Anja, for example, talked about her home/side-activity as having become a *praathuis* (the house of talks, where people are often visiting her to have a chat and a cup of coffee), implying that her own personal space and time and that of her business were blurred. Another example was given, again, by Wilma, who managed to rescue plants from her business only by providing shelter for them in her house (see Figure 3).

> Wilma: This year, I could not place any of my plants outside because it was very cold. The plants grow and they need to planted in bigger pots, otherwise they will die. …there were so many that I have to put them outside [of the greenhouse].
>
> Bettina: Do you also put them inside the house?
>
> Wilma: Oh yes and in the bathroom and in the bedroom (Laughing).

Figure 3. Wilma with her plants (source: M. Markantoni)

The blurring of boundaries between home and business was accepted by these respondents because of its multiple rewards (see discussion below) and because women were enthusiastic about their work. Aldrich and Cliff (2003) cautioned against the flaws in conventional approaches that treat business and family separated. The owners of side activities in our study were entrepreneurs but are also family members and their decisions were significantly affected by their family context (see also Culkin & Smith, 2000; Henk &Trent 1999). Indeed, it is important to note, that the respondents talk about starting up and running a side activity as a team effort between themselves and their partners, and sometimes included their children as well. Starting up a side activity entails a significant investment in personal (i.e. 'free') time. As noted above, many of our respondents have a side activity besides their regular jobs, their household tasks, and childcare responsibilities. From the interviews it emerged that the support by one's partner included financial, emotional, psychological, and practical aspects (see also Baines & Wheelock 2000; Oberhauser 1997). Many respondents talked about the encouragement received in an initial phase of realizing the side-activity as well as the allocation of joint finances to the side-activity 'project', they mentioned the utilization of construction and renovation skills their partner brought to modifying home spaces, and they describe ways in which partners help with ongoing matters such as serving coffee/tea, watering the plants, realizing opening hours, etc. Hanneke and Femke describe the different kinds of support they received:

> Hanneke: I can imagine, if you have a relationship with someone like me who thinks in the evenings, I need to take on another dog, then I need to be able to do that. There is only one person who decides how much work I take on and that's me. The constant nagging about 'you are working too much', I had that in a previous relationship. But I worked hard for this business …. For Harry [current partner] that has never been an issue.

> Femke: When he is at home, he waters the plants, does the garden, put things in their place, like heavy garden furniture. He creates a sense of inner peace for me …. Then I can do more.

5.5 Beyond economic gains

Even though the start up of their activity often entailed much time, and personal and sometimes financial investment, most respondents talked about non-economic gains which motivated them to work and provided satisfaction. Dirk and Miriam provide an interesting example. Dirk and Miriam both work (paid employment) and run a business renting out vacation apartments in their 'free time' (weekends and evenings). This type of

accommodation is different from the others in the region, they said, because it is small-scale and the apartments are decorated in 'grandmother style', offering visitors a 'nostalgic' experience. In order to achieve this particular style of interior decoration, Dirk and Miriam went through a phase of researching authentic materials, furniture and even paints, from this 'grandmother period'. At times, the coupled doubted if their personal and financial investment would be valued by visitors, as in the case of an old fashioned farmhouse bed (see Figure 4).

Miriam: Yes, people are so surprised …. And we really like that.

Dirk: We had a lot of doubts, should we really do this, all that old-fashioned furniture. It could very well be that people don't like it. But the opposite is true. I think people come especially for that bed!

Figure 4. Old fashioned farmhouse bed (*bedstee* in Dutch) in a B&B (source: M. Markantoni)

Many side activity owners we spoke with had similar 'success stories', for example, Helen, Wilma and Anja.

Helen: It's great. I have some women who simply come for the pleasantness and cosiness here. They are a bit older and suffer a bit from arthritis, so I help them and we make jokes

about how they will be finished first. And then people go home very satisfied, and that's really great. I think that has something to do with my background in carework. I like to please people.

Wilma: They say, 'the mood here is great' or, ehm, 'you know exactly when I come here to be quiet or when I come here for a chat'. You need to be able to sense that…

Anja: I have a lot of love to give, even though these are not my own children. […] I know I am not their mother but the love I have to give and the passion to care for these people determines how I can do this job well.… This is a talent of mine that I can build on.

It must be noted here, that these women have a background in the care sector, caring for elderly people (Helen and Wilma) or for children with disabilities (Anja). These women utilize their skills, optimize them and provide added value to their side activities. With regards to the transition from paid work in the care sector, which is often characterized by shifts and irregular working hours, it should be emphasized that when these women start something of their own, this helped them overcome their inferior position and create their own flexible work schedule.

Other respondents highlighted non-monetary rewards at the personal level such as such as 'personal happiness', 'personal growth', 'a time for relaxation', 'the opportunity to make my own creation', and 'to do something I like'.

In conclusion, Dirk stated:

[Running this side activity] is more than just earning money. That is not the reason…We wanted to do something special and we wanted to do it beyond the fact of earning money, we wanted to please people. We wanted to offer people a nice vacation … we just wanted to do it irrespective of the additional income. We wanted to be proud of what we do.

5.6 Conclusions

In light of the discussion above, our main finding is that side activities are an important part of the respondents' everyday lives, needs and identities. In the Veenkoloniën, a Dutch rural area in decline, women find affordable opportunities to start up a side activity. Although the respondents may not have moved to the Veenkoloniën if they could have afforded a more expensive house elsewhere, they converted this regional disadvantage to their personal advantage by starting a side activity and utilizing space, rurality and affordable housing.

An important part in the realization of these activities are life transitions but also the support of their partner and more broadly their family. Their support has been experienced

and valued as an inextricable part of the everyday organizational and emotional tasks at home and the side activity. The ongoing interaction between conducting everyday household tasks, including care work and bigger projects pertaining to the side activity, provides opportunities for these rural women to invest in their own identity work as well in order to be both carer and entrepreneur. As Oberhauser (1995) noted, women engaged in home-based work have to negotiate not only their time and space but also their multiple roles in the household. Side activities, in our cases, actually facilitated a muddling of both women's and men's gender roles and some sort of liberation from these roles for both partners. We would argue that the setting, the family home (plus surroundings) is rather important in accomplishing this muddling, even though there are both advantages and disadvantages. Although women illustrated that they are always accessible to the demands of their business when this is located in the home, this is the case too, at least to some extent, for other members of the family.

In relation to the literature described above on rural entrepreneurship and homeworking, it is notable that side activities were valued most for their intangible rewards such as, pride and personal growth (Oberhauser 1995) but also satisfaction from serving and caring for customers (see Newbery & Bosworth 2010). One likely explanation is that side activities do not provide a main income and, in general, the respondents are financial secured. Jongeneel et al. (2008), for example, referred to this as psychological income derived from the interaction with people.

In terms of broader implications, we would argue that side activities may constitute the 'glue' that keeps households in place, in particular in declining areas. As people are making choices about work, family and overall wellbeing, the fact that they have established a business of their own in which they can develop their own ideas and projects and be in charge of them is an important pull factor. We would argue that side activities may have broader implications for diversifying and revitalizing rural economies and help to improve the quality of life and wellbeing in rural areas than evident at first sight.

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6 Growth expectations for side activities

6 Growth expectations for side activities in rural areas[1]

Abstract

Purpose – The purpose of this article is to examine growth expectations and factors influencing growth of side activities in rural areas.

Design/methodology/approach – Data were collected in the rural areas of 36 Dutch municipalities by means of a detailed survey. This resulted in 260 response cases. The analysis consists of a descriptive account of respondents' intentions to expand a side activity and a logistic regression explaining growth expectations of these activities.

Findings – The main conclusion is that although growth is not expected in a large number of side activities, there is a group of owners who clearly aspire to expand the scale of their activities. Their personal aspirations and aspirations for economic well-being are the most common motivations. These characteristics also have a bearing on the future growth of side activities and consequently their impact on rural development.

Research limitations/implications – Since this article examines growth expectations and not actual growth, the findings cannot be interpreted directly in terms of economic impact on rural development.

Originality/value – Scholars and policy makers have paid little attention to side activities in rural areas and specifically to their growth potential. This article enhances our understanding of the growth expectations of those who carry out side activities and shows the potential of such activities in diversifying and revitalizing rural areas.

Keywords – Side Activities, Growth Expectations, Rural Small Businesses, Rural Development, the Netherlands.

Paper type – Research paper.

6.1 Introduction

In recent years, diversification of economic activities has become a prominent theme in rural development studies (Bezemer et al. 2003; O' Connor 2006). The wide range of emerging activities in rural areas offers the promise of ameliorating negative developments in rural areas including agricultural decline, rural depopulation and a one-sided sector composition. In addition, diversification aligns with new societal demands and it can rejuvenate the social

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vitality of rural communities (Broekhuizen et al. 1997; Daalhuizen et al. 2003; OECD 2009). In particular, successful emerging businesses can add great value to local community development (see Henderson 2002). Small firms, by creating jobs, increasing incomes and wealth, are often regarded as important vehicles for rural development. They play a crucial role in revitalizing stagnated economies and in helping to improve the quality of life and well-being in rural areas (North & Smallbone 1996). Sustainable and expanding firms thus constitute an important factor if small-scale activities are to have an impact on the rural economy. Shepherd and Wiklund (2005) argue that it is hard to imagine that small businesses will have an economic impact in the absence of growth and expansion.

Side activities

In this article, we focus on a specific type of small enterprise that can play a role in the development of rural communities: *side activities*. Side activities are *small scale, home-based activities that provide a supplementary income at the household level.* These activities yield an *additional* income to the household involved. It is not the main source of income and the owner either combines the side activity with paid employment or combines the side activity with household tasks while the partner provides the main income. The definition of side activities applies to rural as well as urban locations and to entrepreneurs who are farmers and non-farmers. In this study, however, we focus on side activities in rural areas, which are executed by non-farm households. Existing studies have focused mostly on side activities (employing terms such as other gainful activities, non-farm activities and diversified activities) carried out by farmers (see Barbieri & Mahoney 2009; Chaplin et al. 2004; Hersuld 2007). Recent policy aims to diversify the rural economy has also, as in the Netherlands, increased attention for side activities by non-farm households. The impact of these activities is, however, largely unclear.

In this article then, we investigate the growth expectations of non-farmers with regard to their side activities. The article assesses the long-term prospects of side activities. How viable are side activities, will they continue or even transform into a main occupation? Answers to these questions give an indication of the *'seriousness'* of these activities and their consequent economic impact on rural development. Also, the intention to expand side activities impact on the social development of rural areas by offering places for socialization (see Markantoni et al. 2009; Markantoni & Van Hoven 2010). As such, the growth potential can influence the economic development, social resilience and well-being of rural communities. Finally, assessing the growth potential of side activities provides input for policy discussions because of concerns regarding the spatial impact of such activities. It is feared that the activities may adversely affect rural qualities and ruin the rural landscape.

This article explores the growth potential of side activities in rural areas. It assesses *the growth expectations of owners with regard to their side activities and the factors that influence their growth expectations*. The remainder of the article proceeds as follows. The next section zooms in on previous studies related to small business growth and factors influencing growth, providing a guide to study side activities. Then a discussion about research methods and data sources employed follows. Next, empirical findings are presented and growth expectations and factors influencing growth of side activities are examined. A discussion of the results and their implications for policy and future research concludes the article.

6.2 Small business growth perspectives

Although there is no research that addresses the growth expectations of side activities directly, there is ample research on factors that are responsible for the growth of small businesses.[2] Given the similarities of the two types, we take this literature as the point of departure for the theoretical discussion.

There are two basic approaches to studying growth. One can study either the *actual growth* or the *growth expectations* of firms. Although inherently different, the two approaches are closely linked with respect to their outcomes. Previous research suggests that growth expectations/aspirations are a good predictor of actual growth (see Bird 1992; Gray 2000; Morrison et al. 2003; Sexton & Bowman-Upton 1991). On the basis of these studies, we assume that, although rural development is fuelled by the actual growth of firms, growth aspirations can predict actual growth quite well. Given the difficulties in identifying and following side activities over time, actual growth is very difficult to measure. We therefore focus on growth aspirations, which can provide an indication of the magnitude of the growth of side activities and as a consequence a prediction for the development of rural communities.

6.2.1 To grow or not to grow?

A rich literature discusses the potential growth of small firms (see Cliff 1998; Davidsson et al. 2005; Greenbank 2001). A logical assumption following the profit-maximization behaviour would be to expand one's small business by generating more income (Davidsson 1987). However, zooming in on the literature, we observe that pursuing growth is actually not the main objective for a majority of small business owners. Their wish is to remain small (see Atterton & Affleck 2010; Greenbank 2001; Storey 1994). Davidsson et al. (2005), for

[2] According to the European Commission (EC 2005), small firms are divided into three types – micro-enterprises, small enterprises and medium enterprises – based on statistical criteria such as the number of employees and annual income levels (Storey 1994). Side activities, because they seldom employ more than three persons (own database), can be classified at the lower end of the scale of small businesses, as micro-enterprises.

example, note that most firms start small, live small and die small.[3] Apart from personal ambitions, business owners' intentions to expand also seem to be influenced by the environment. Rural areas are likely to cap such intentions as these areas experience structural and institutional deficiencies, such as poor infrastructure, small-scale markets and limited number of customers (Anthopoulou 2010). These observations go some way in explaining why rural areas are characterized by a plethora of small-scale and home-based businesses. On the basis of the foregoing we can expect that most side activities actually do not aim at increasing their business operation.

This does not, however, imply that they are not important. Atterton and Affleck (2010) argue that even if a small business owner is not planning to grow, still the role of small businesses in the socio-economic vitality of the rural area where they are located is critical. Through business networks, local collaborations or even through services and facilities, small businesses can be of great value for the development of their community.

6.2.2 Factors influencing growth

Many factors have been identified to explain the growth of small firms as well as their impact on the development of rural areas. In basic terms, factors influencing growth can be divided into two main categories: *internal* and *external* factors (see Glancey 1998; Mitra & Matlay 2000; Storey 1994). Internal factors are related to the characteristics of the owner and the firm. External factors refer to the environment in which the firms are active.

Internal factors include the resources, skills and experiences available to the entrepreneur. Indicators including age, education and previous experience represent the set of skills available to the entrepreneur and the impact on growth is interpreted accordingly (Davidsson 1989; Storey 1994; Turok 1991). In addition to the skills and resources available, *motivations* and *aspirations* of the owner play a critical role in the growth of the firm (see Barkham 1994; Shepherd & Wiklund 2005; Turok 1991; Walker & Brown 2004). Storey (1994, p. 128) distinguishes between positive and negative motives for starting a business. He hypothesizes that owners with positive motives are more likely to expand their businesses than those with negative motives. Positive motives are defined as the desire to earn money (pull factor) while negative motives refer to motives (such as unemployment) that pushed entrepreneurs into self-employment. That said, Wiklund et al. (2003) in their paper 'What do they think and feel about growth?' found that non-economic motives are more important in explaining growth than the opportunity of individual economic gain and loss. This is worth examining as there are examples showing a positive relationship between growth motivations and business

[3] Taking size into consideration, micro-enterprises (0-4 employees), are even less growth-oriented than those with five to nine employees (Curran & Storey 1993). This could be particularly relevant for side activities as they employ a maximum of three persons.

growth (see Bellu & Sherman 1995; Kolvereid & Bullvåg 1996). The existing literature thus implies that it is important, in the context of explaining growth, to distinguish between economic and non-economic motives for starting a business.

Alongside personal attributes, the *characteristics of small firms* also influence growth. A plethora of factors has been put forward. Pertinent indicators include the age and the size of the firm (e.g. the number of employees), sector, premises, sources of capital, type of ownership, collaborations and the availability of land/space (see Atterton & Affleck 2010; Raley & Moxey 2000; Storey 1994; Turok 1991). Among these studies, there has been much debate over the importance of each of the aforementioned factors and their relation to growth. Some argue that the age and the size of the firm are strong predictors of growth (Storey 1994), while others stipulate that resources such as technological innovations are also crucial (Robson & Bennett 2000). In general and in relation to the above, bigger firms because of availability and access to resources such as technology, networks, regional markets as well as information services are expected to grow more than smaller firms (Wiklund & Shepherd 2003). Similar to small firms, we expect side activities be less growth-oriented than larger firms as they face more barriers and experience shortages of capital which limit their capacity to grow.

Growth of firms always takes place in the *environment* the business is a part of, and factors external to the firm need to be taken into account as well. These include constraints enforced via taxes, policies, the labour and financial markets, the competitive environment and state support (see Davidsson 1989; Storey 1994). Also the general state of the economy plays a crucial role as demand may fall during periods of economic downturn. As Anderson et al. (2010) note, the growth of firms depends on the ability of the firm to respond to threats emerging from the external environment especially in turbulent times. In response to the economic recession, many studies demonstrate that rural and remote rural firms in particular are more resilient and flexible in adapting to change than their urban counterparts (Irvine & Anderson 2004). Rural firms are flexible and can respond actively to unfavourable environments (Duchesneau & Gartner 1990; North & Smallbone 1996). Moreover, Gülümser et al. (2009) and Jack and Anderson (2002) suggest that the embeddedness of rural small firms in their local communities is also considered an important factor for success. For side activities this could mean that because they are small, independent and being carried out in rural communities, they are expected to be embedded in the locality and to be able to easily adapt to change, all elements considered as success factors.

A growth factor that is highly available in rural areas specifically is land and space and the fact that some businesses are characterized by rural qualities in their operation. In relation to that, Raley and Moxey (2000, p. 29) state that ‘stricter planning’ regimes in rural areas act to

stifle business development. An important implication is that land regulations could inhibit and restrict potential growth. This could also apply to side activities that aim at increasing the scale of their business, particularly as policy makers appear specifically concerned with the adverse impact of side activities on the rural landscape.

Summarizing our foregoing discussion, small business growth is influenced both by internal and external factors. Because small businesses are similar to side activities, we expect that the abovementioned factors will also influence the growth expectations of the owners of side activities. An important question to be answered at this point concerns factors which are associated more with growth. In this regard, a literature review revealed that internal rather than external factors are more likely to influence the growth of small businesses (see Shepherd & Wiklund 2005; Storey 1994; Turok 1991; Walker & Brown 2004). As such, three components are expected to influence the growth expectations of the side activities, (1) the *individual characteristics of the owner* including personal characteristics as well as motivation, elements inherent in the individual, (2) the *characteristics of side activities* including defining elements such as age, size and type which are internal to the said activity and (3) the effect of the *environment* including local embeddedness.

6.3 Data and methodology

The analysis draws from a survey on side activities by non-farmers in rural areas in the Netherlands. Since side activities are invisible in the records of professional organizations or other institutions,[4] it was necessary to physically go out into rural areas and search for them. Fortunately, because many side activities involve touristic activities, services and selling home-grown products, these are often indicated on signposts and roadside signs. Making an inventory of side activities thus involved canvassing rural areas by different means of transportations (e.g. by car, bicycle, boat, or local transportation) and spotting roadside signs for such business activities. Then, the owners were asked whether the activity spotted fitted the criteria of side activities (i.e. providing a supplementary income, home-based, non-farmers). The aim was to locate all side activities in the selected research areas. To minimize missing cases and include non-visible side activities, a snowballing method complemented the identification using road signs. Five percent of all respondents were found through snowballing.

After identifying the side activities, a detailed survey was conducted among owners. This approach was chosen as a variety of information was required to obtain an overview of the side activities in a short period of time. A survey is an effective method to gather such

[4] For example, in the Netherlands, side activities registered at the Chamber of Commerce and other professional organizations are categorized under businesses.

information (Rossi et al. 1983). The survey was executed by means of face-to-face interviews with the owners and it covered a variety of topics, including, basic information about side activities (e.g. age, size, sector) and their owners (e.g. age, gender, education, marital status, number of children, income level), start-up motives (open- and close- ended questions) and issues that may have influenced the decision to start (e.g. availability and necessity of start-up resources). The survey also included questions connected to the future prospects and factors that may influence the development/growth of side activities.[5]

The side activities were found in a selected number of municipalities, which were selected in a stratified way. Given the focus on rural areas, urban centres and their direct surroundings were excluded from the sampling frame. Very highly urbanized municipalities (12 municipalities) and highly urbanized municipalities (59 municipalities) were dropped from the sampling frame.[6] In addition, in order to minimize the influence of these urban centres in the selection, municipalities within 15 km from the 12 very highly urbanized municipalities and municipalities that were inside the range of 7.5 km from the 59 highly urbanized municipalities were also excluded. By excluding the above municipalities, the sampling frame covered a total of 137 municipalities.[7] Fieldwork was carried out in 36 municipalities, 28 randomly (from the sampling frame) and 7 that were purposely selected (in the Veenkoloniën, for details see Markantoni et al. 2011). Municipalities in the Veenkoloniën were oversampled as this area (in the northeast of the country) is generally considered as the most remote rural areas of the Netherlands.[8]

Following the procedure already described, 506 side activities were identified in total. From these, 260 respondents completed the survey, which represents a response rate of 51 percent. This rate is relatively high compared to small business studies (e.g. Cliff 1998; Greenbank 2001) probably because of the personal interaction with the respondents. This generally reduces the non-response (Singleton and Straits, 2001).

The data analysis of this study consisted of two steps. Firstly, a descriptive analysis reports the growth expectations and the associated explanations. Secondly, a binary logistic regression analysis examines the combined effect of the factors that influence growth expectations.

[5] Data from this survey referring to start-up motives are also presented in an article by Markantoni et al. 2009.
[6] Urbanization rates in the Netherlands are applied to classify different areas based on the number of addresses per km^2. Very highly urbanized municipalities have more than 2500 addresses per km^2; Highly urbanized municipalities have between 1500 until 2500 addresses per km^2 (CBS 2007).
[7] The total number of municipalities in the Netherlands in 2007 was 443.
[8] Based on address density and the perception of the general Dutch population (Haartsen et al. 2003; Heins 2002).

6.4 Results

6.4.1 What are the growth expectations of owners of side activities?

To find out their future plans, three related questions were posed to owners of side activities (see Table 1). First, respondents were asked whether they had plans to expand their side activity in the next five years (2009-2014). As expected and in line with small business literature, a minority of the respondents (28%) anticipate growth. The modest growth intentions are also reflected in expectations about future income. Only 20 percent expect their side activities to provide the main source of income eventually. The questions indicate different aspects of growth. The first question measures growth in a broader sense. The second question is more specific. It measures a specific transition from a supplementary to a main source of income, indicating that the side activities' owners have future growth plans. It denotes a significant step in the growth process, more so than growth in general. The results are nevertheless correlated (Cramer's V correlation, 0.38). Taking a broader perspective on development, the respondents were asked to indicate *the likely development of the side activity in the future*. Table 1 shows the results. Half of the respondents expect to maintain their current position, a quarter expect to grow (thus validating the first question in which 28% of the respondents expected growth) and 18 percent indicate that they expect to quit either by stopping, selling, or passing the activity on to other family members.

The majority of owners surveyed do not contemplate growth. The results reiterate, for a somewhat different group, that most small firms do not intend to grow (see Curran & Blackburn 2001; Raley & Moxey 2000; Storey 1994). Side activities appear less inclined to grow, however, than small businesses in general. Atterton and Afflect (2010) found that about half (53%) of micro-businesses in the rural northeast of UK maintain their current position and that just over 39 percent have growth expectations. By comparison, owners of side activities have even fewer intentions to expand than do their counterparts running micro-businesses in rural areas. However, we have to be aware that the geographic location and context differ and therefore caution should be exercised in interpreting data. In general, we can argue that with regard to studies on small business growth, the argument that growth is not the main purpose is also pertinent for side activities.

Table 1
Growth expectations for side activities

	Count (n)	Percentage (%)
Are you going to expand your side activity?		
Yes	72	28
No	188	72
Will the side activity become your main source of income?		
Yes	52	20
No	204	80
What is the likely development of the side activity in the future?		
Remain as it is	130	50
Expand it	66	25
Stop/sell/pass it over	46	18
Other reasons/I don't know	18	7

In order to interpret what the respondents actually meant when referring to growth, growth was broken down into several aspects (hours spent, land use, employees and collaborations). The respondents answered the question whether they expected a specific resource to increase in the short (<2 years) and in the long term (>2 years). Table 2 shows that most owners expect to increase the personal time spent on the activity. That is not surprising as investing in time is quite common in small business, as people are highly committed to their work when they run their own business (see Loscocco & Leicht 1993). In addition to time investment, people also expect to collaborate with others in order to expand their side activities. Findings from previous studies on small businesses indicate that it is important to establish links with other SMEs in order to pursue growth and improve their performance (Robson & Bennett 2000; Gomes-Casseres 1997). Furthermore, responses from owners of our survey indicate that the number of employees is unlikely to grow for side activities (Table 2). Although in general, small businesses play an important role in rejuvenating stagnated economies through employment creation (North & Smallbone 1995), side activities will probably not influence employment rates in rural areas to an extent similar to small businesses. Moreover, pursuing growth by increasing land/space is less often undertaken in comparison to the other resources. Side activities are not expected to expand in terms of using land or space for their operation. A closer look at the small business literature revealed that in rural micro-enterprises in particular, the availability of workspace is considered to be among the factors that constrain growth (Atterton & Affleck 2010; Raley & Moxey 2000). Moreover, business premises have also been reported to influence growth. Small firms with growth plans are most likely to be

based on business premises rather than at home (Turok 1991). As side activities are by definition home-based, this may already restrict their growth and expansion potential.

Table 2
Aspects of growth

Growth factors (resources)	Time period	
	<2 years Increase	>2 years Increase
Hours	48 %	58 %
Partnerships	30 %	40 %
Employees	10 %	20 %
Land/space	11 %	17 %

(n=72, respondents who will expand their side activity)

6.4.2 Which factors influence the growth expectations of side activities?

Now that the growth expectations of side activities have been identified, the focus shifts to the question of the factors which influence these expectations. First, a descriptive analysis is carried out on the growth factors identified by the respondents. Second, a binary logistic regression analysis assesses the combined impact of internal and external factors on growth.

Descriptive analysis

In response to the close-ended question on the factors that played a role in expanding the side activity the respondents stressed the availability of resources such as land/space and time spent on the activity (Table 3). Looking more closely at the availability of land and space, although the respondents mentioned earlier that they do not expect to increase these resources, in this question, land/space is considered to play an important role in the pursuit of growth (see Atterton & Affleck 2010). An explanation could be that the respondents who intend to expand their activity already have the available land and space and therefore rate it as an important factor for growth. Land and space are therefore not considered a constraint but an incentive to grow.

Table 3
Factors that promote expanding a side activity

	To no extent (%)	To a small extent (%)	To a great extent (%)
Availability of land/space	30	16	54
Availability of time	25	25	50
The possibility of earning more	26	25	49
Market perspectives	25	26	49
The possibility to cooperate with others	56	26	25

(n=72, respondents who will grow their side activity)

In addition to the above mentioned factors influencing growth, the respondents were also asked to indicate the factors which were important in their decision to retain the current scale of their side activity (closed question, results in Table 4). The fact that people refer to their activity as a hobby scored high (53%) implying that the start-up motivation is not economic but that is related to a lifestyle need. However, a side activity is not the same as a hobby. By definition, hobbies do not aim for any economic rewards per se, whereas side activities involve income generation.[9] As far as the availability of time is concerned, this does not seem to influence the growth expectations of side activities. Owners do not want to spend much time and energy on the side activity as it is not their main source of income. Moreover, local government restrictions[10] (10%) do not seem to play any significant role in influencing the desire to expand side activities. Raley and Moxey (2000, p. 31), in their report on rural micro-enterprises, argue that only a small proportion of small firms experience planning permission refusals as the 'development control [from the local governments] does not directly fetter growth of the majority of the micro-businesses'. As such, government restrictions are not the main inhibitor of the growth of side activities. Finally, among the factors that barely play a role in growth are the lack of the available resources and the fact that people do not earn much from the side activity. This could also be partly explained by the fact that these activities provide only a supplementary income, meaning that people may not want to invest much in them.

Table 4
Factors that prohibited expansion of side activities

	Yes (%)
It is a hobby	53
Too much time and energy	17
Local government restrictions	10
No available resources	7
Because of age	7
Not enough income earned from it	6
Total	100

(n=188, respondents who will not expand their side activity)

The growth factors that have been identified indicate people's perceptions that guide their decision of whether or not to expand their side activity. Next, binary logistic regression is performed not only to explore the hidden relationships that may influence growth

[9] Accordingly, Stebbins (1998, p. 50) explicitly distinguishes side activities from hobbies saying that 'sideline businesses are not considered true hobbies'.
[10] Government restrictions are mainly referred to the literature as planning growth permissions (Atterton & Affleck 2010; Raley & Moxey 2000).

expectations but also to determine whether the abovementioned reasons appear in the models as well and to test the extent to which internal and external factors influence growth.

Binary logistic regression

Table 5 summarizes the variables used in this analysis. The main dependent variable of the analysis is defined as whether people expect to expand their side activity (see Table 1). Based on the theoretical framework, the factors influencing growth are divided into three components reflecting the internal and external factors that influence growth: (1) *Individual characteristics of the owner*, (2) *side activity characteristics* and (3) *the environment*.

The variables pertaining to *individual characteristics* include the reasons for starting a side activity and indicators that relate to the access to relevant resources and skills. As mentioned earlier, such motivations are an important explanation of growth. Therefore, it is expected to also play an important role in predicting growth of side activities. From a previous analysis concerning the motivations for starting side activities, a varimax-rotated factor analysis was performed, which resulted in three factors – F1) *Internal aspirations and pursuits*, F2) *Economic well-being and independence* and F3) *Rurality and lifestyle* – together accounting for 42.94 percent of the variance in the underlying 17 reasons (Markantoni et al. 2010). The first factor is personal in nature and includes motivations such as personal growth, meeting a challenge or achieving quality of life. The second factor consists of financial considerations, with the main indicator being the wish to earn an extra income. The last factor is associated with reasons arising from the fact that people live in rural areas. Having a side activity may match their rural lifestyle and they may have access to land and space. Although such reasons are personal, they do relate to the external environment as well. In addition to the motivations, personal characteristics are included. The characteristics are interpreted as reflections of the skills and experiences that entrepreneurs possess. Age (mean: 52 years), having previous experience as an entrepreneur (19%) and education (9% primary, 60% secondary, 31% higher) are all expected to positively correlate to ability and consequently growth. Finally, gender is included as a control variable without prior expectations, although there are some indications that women are less growth-oriented.

The second block of variables consists of *side activity characteristics.* These indicate the extent to which the side activity is able to muster resources for growth. We include duration of the side activity (mean 11.5 years, SD: 11.0), number of employees (62% are solo efforts). Finally, the type of side activity is also included in the analysis. We distinguish between side activities in tourism and other types of activities (e.g. services, antiques, goods production). Most side activities in the data set are in tourism and we correct for a possible tourism effect by including this dummy.

The last component includes *external factors* influencing growth. Whether people received a subsidy to start their activities (4.6%) is included as a variable. However, government restrictions (20.8% of respondents faced government restrictions) are not included in the models, although it was mentioned by the respondents (see Table 4). This is firstly because it does not add to the explanatory power of the models and secondly, because of its reverse causality. If the owners want to expand their activity, they are more likely to encounter restrictions from the government. This makes interpretation difficult. Local embeddedness is measured in the number of years that someone has lived in the rural community (Kalantaridis & Bika 2006). We expect that the longer someone has lived in a specific region, the more that person (and his/her business) has established a relevant network. In contrast, people relocating from urban areas may adversely affect the level of embeddedness in the rural. The results show that the length of residence in the current home is on average 19.7 years (SD 16.6) and about one-third of side activity owners lived in a city five years ago (35%).

A binary logistic regression was performed on the variables predicting growth expectations (Table 5). For the analysis, variables from each of the three components were included separately and, finally, all variables were added together to determine their combined effect on growth expectations. Because motivations were expected to play a prominent role in predicting growth, they were first examined alone (Model 1) and then in combination with the rest of the variables. More specifically, Models 2, 3 and 4 include the effect of the individual in addition to the effect of the motivations, the side activity and the environment, respectively. Model 5 shows the results when all variables are included in the analysis.

The analysis produced five statistically significant models (Table 5). Model 1 shows the important role of the motivations in predicting growth. Even more convincingly, they remain statistically significant in all other models of the analysis. Motivations related to individual aspirations and economic well-being are particularly statistically significant and positively related to growth expectations. In contrast, the factor 'rural lifestyle' does not seem to play a role in predicting growth in any of the models. A possible explanation could be that growth does not fit the rural lifestyle. These results are in line with Storey's (1994) expectations concerning growth. Positive motivations such as the desire to earn more are indeed significant and positively associated with growth (Storey 1994). Rurality, however, which is more of an external motivation (the environment seems suitable for starting a side activity) can be interpreted as a more negative motivation in Storey's terms. Indeed, this is not conducive for growth.

Concerning the personal characteristics, previous experience with a side activity is not strongly related to higher growth expectations. In small business literature there has been much controversy about this finding. Although some argue that previous experience of

owning a business is not associated with growth-oriented firms (Turok 1991), other studies suggest the opposite although it also depends on the availability of resources, motives as well as personal characteristics such as age and gender (Storey 1994).

With respect to the age of the respondent, the results indicate that it is significant and negatively associated with growth (Models 2 and 5). The younger the owner, the more incline he or she is to pursue the growth trajectory. This contradicts an interpretation based on the availability of resources. The result can be interpreted, however, in terms of motivations. Younger entrepreneurs generally want to expand their business faster than older entrepreneurs. As a result of these contradicting explanations, the evidence about the relationship between age and growth is mixed. There are various studies that shows that age does not influence the growth of a business (Turok 1991; Wiklund & Shepherd 2003). However, Storey (1994, p. 134) contends that the age of the owner negatively influences the growth rates of that business. Gender is significantly associated with growth expectations (Models 2 and 5). Men are more prone to pursue growth than women in the case of side activities. This is in line with the study by Cliff (1998), who examined growth aspirations with relation to gender. A similar study (Rosa et al. 1996) also found that men were significantly more likely than women to expand their business. In contrast, in an extensive literature review, Storey (1994, p. 136) concluded that gender is not a key predictor of growth. Finally, education does not play a role in predicting the growth expectations of side activities in any of the models, implying that growth is not tied to educational and professional qualifications. In line with this, Barkham (1994, p. 124) also failed to find a significant influence of education on growth. However, there are studies where a positive relationship has been found (Shepherd & Wiklund 2005; Stanworth & Curran 1976).

Examining the variables related to *side activity characteristics*, only age is significant and negatively associated with growth. The younger the business activity the more it is expected to pursue growth, which is also in line with studies on small businesses. The rest of the variables with regard to side activity characteristics, such as type and number of people employed, are not significant. Concerning the relationship between the type of side activity and growth, in the literature there is no similar distinction for comparison. However, a number of studies have been conducted on different sectors of small businesses. In these studies, there are significant differences between sectors (e.g. manufacturing, services) and the typical growth rates of firms (Storey 1994; Turok 1991). As regards side activities, it can be expected that different types of activities have a different impact on growth, just as different types of sectors do. However, we find no empirical support here. Regardless of whether side activities are related to tourism or other types of activities, no significant relations with growth

expectations were found. Hence, variables related to side activities appear to have less influence in predicting growth than variables related to the individual.

As far as variables related to *the environment* are concerned, these appear to be less associated with growth expectations in comparison to the internal factors. For example, whether owners of side activities had received a subsidy or not did not reveal any significant association with growth expectations in Models 4 and 5. The variables connected to local embeddedness also do not seem to play a role (Models 4 and 5). Only Model 4 shows a slightly negative significance, suggesting that people who previously lived in cities probably do not have expectations for growth. A possible explanation is that people moving from urban locations may be looking for a rural lifestyle. For them, growth may not be the main objective and maintaining the side activity sufficiently rewarding. The variable measuring the years of residence in the current home also did not reveal a significant relationship with growth. The lack of this relationship conflicts with research findings on small businesses concerning local embeddedness. Based on theory, local embeddedness is a key factor for business success. The results in this analysis do not corroborate this finding for side activities.

Table 5
Predictors of growth expectations of side activities

	Model 1[a]	Model 2[a]	Model 3[a]	Model 4[a]	Model 5[a]	Model 6[b]
1. The individual						
Motivations						
(F1) Individual aspirations/pursuits	0.61(0.16)***	0.67 (0.18)***	0.49(0.17)***	0.62(0.17)***	0.66(0.19)***	0.57(0.23)**
(F2) Economic well-being	0.40(0.16)***	0.31 (0.17)*	0.37 (0.16)**	0.42(0.16)***	0.36 (0.18)**	0.81(0.21)***
(F3) Rurality	0.22 (0.15)	0.16 (0.16)	0.27 (0.16)*	0.18 (0.16)	0.17 (0.17)	-0.20 (0.20)
Personal characteristics						
Experience (0=No)		0.65 (0.40)			0.70 (0.42)*	0.34 (0.48)
Age		-0.04(0.14)***			-0.03 (0.02)**	-0.04(0.02)**
Gender (0=female)		0.98 (0.34)***			1.06(0.37)***	0.24 (0.42)
Education (primary)		Reference			Reference	Reference
Education (secondary)		-0.28 (0.59)			-0.17 (0.62)	0.01 (0.80)
Education (higher)		-0.14 (0.62)			0.17 (0.65)	-0.06 (0.83)
2. The side activity						
Type of side activity (0=Tourism)			0.24 (0.32)		0.06 (0.36)	0.68 (0.44)
Duration of the side activity			-0.04 (0.02)**		-0.05 (0.02)**	-0.07 (0.33)**
People employed (0=more than 1 person)			0.09 (0.32)		-0.31 (0.36)	-0.31 (0.41)
3. The environment						
Grant (0=No)				-0.18 (0.72)	0.03 (0.76)	1.64 (0.75)**
Length of residence in current home				-0.07 (0.01)	0.01 (0.01)	0.02 (0.2)
City dweller (0=No)				-0.60 (0.34)*	-0.59 (0.37)	-0.27 (0.47)
N	243	236	237	240	229	230
Cox and Snell R^2	0.094	0.156	0.115	0.108	0.188	0.225
Nagelkerke R^2	0.136	0.225	0.166	0.156	0.270	0.352

[a] Dependent variable: are you going to expand your side activity? (1=yes, 0=no)
[b] Dependent variable: will the side activity become a main activity? (1=yes, 0=no)
*p<0.1, ** p<0.05, *** p<0.01

As a robustness check, we reran the model using a dependent variable that captures a different aspect of growth. We used the question *will the side activity become your main source of income?* (see Table 1). This question represents a more specific way measuring growth. Model 6 in Table 5 reports the results. It is clear from the results that the variables that played a prominent role in predicting growth in the previous models remain significant in Model 6. This shows the robustness of the model. In particular, motivations related to the individual and economic well-being are significantly associated with growth. The age of the respondent and the age of the firm also remain significant, whereas the effect of gender disappears and that of subsidies is now significant. This suggests that people who have received subsidies are likely to convert their side activity into a main activity. In addition, Bridge et al. (2003, p. 289) argue that research findings are inconclusive in determining whether or not financial support indeed generates growth.

In light of the foregoing discussion, we found that internal factors related to the owners are most important in explaining growth. Although the variables capturing the role of the environment may be improved, this study does corroborate existing studies that find that the business environment plays only a minor role when it comes to explaining growth. Internal factors are more important in the explanation of differences in growth across firms or, in this case, side activities.

6.5 Conclusions

In this article, we set out to examine the growth expectations for side activities in rural areas. The article presented an explorative analysis describing both the actual intentions to expand side activities and an exploratory analysis of the factors that influence the growth of such activities.

The largest proportion of entrepreneurs engaged in side activities have no aspiration to expand the business, not in terms of employees, time spent or other inputs nor in terms of income generated. Although some side activities were initiated because of economic motives, the main reason for starting a side activity relates to attaining personal development goals. These findings are very much in line with existing studies on small businesses (see Atterton & Affleck 2010; Raley & Moxey 2000).

On the one hand, the lack of intention to increase the scale of business may have to do with the rural setting of the side activities. In rural areas, the size, structural as well as institutional deficiencies appear to be important challenges that confront businesses. Therefore, rural areas are not characterized by high-growth entrepreneurs but more by lifestyle entrepreneurs who are in search of a (rural) lifestyle which enhances the quality of life in rural communities (see Henderson 2002). On the other hand, growth expectations can be explained, and more clearly

so by accounting for personal and firm characteristics. In relation to that, our findings suggest that for the group of side activities, internal factors and more specific motives play a more important role than external factors in predicting growth. The internal factors include personal characteristics such as age and gender. However, motivation seems to stand out as being particularly significant to growth. Start-up motives related to economic gain and independence are important in explaining the expected growth. At this point, we have to iterate that side activities are supplementary activities and not a main source of income, meaning that, owners of side activities who are economically secure, may not strive for economic growth but may aim for another type of pay-off, related to personal growth, development and the search for a rural lifestyle (see also Townroe & Mallalieu 1993).

Given their lack of ambitions for commercial expansion and the fact that these activities are already small, the economic impact in terms of turnover and employment is likely to be small. However, there may be other important effects of side activities which are found mostly in terms of the social impact generated by these activities. Moreover, the side activities are found in rural areas and they use rural space and rural qualities for their operation (e.g. mini campsite, tea garden, canoe rental). As such, they enhance the attributes of the physical environment in the rural.

The findings have two contributions to policy development. Firstly, findings indicate that in order to spot growth-oriented side activities, individual characteristics such as age and gender as well as motives related to personal and economic well-being have to be identified. Policies aimed at strengthening the rural economy through side activities should focus primarily on the people involved in the side activities and less so on the environment. Secondly, the policy question related to the spatial land use regime is addressed. Side activities are small-scale activities located in the direct vicinity of the home. As such they do not seem to claim or seek much space and additional land. Therefore, we argue that side activities should not be considered to be threats to rural attributes, nor would these activities require changes in rural land use planning. That said, local governments in the Netherlands should not consider side activities as an element that taints and threatens the character of rural areas. Specific policies and regulations that inhibit their growth are out of place.

Although the findings in this study have shaped our interpretations, it needs to be acknowledged that our quantitative approach does have drawbacks. It does not provide an in-depth understanding of the reasons for the potential growth of side activities. Therefore, our recommendation for further research is a qualitative approach that could yield valuable insight into the actual growth of these activities and their impact on the socio-economic development of rural communities, preferably in a specific geographical location.

In terms of broader implications, we would argue that although the rate of growth of side activities is not expected to be proceed at a fast pace in the coming years, it does not mean that they will not have an impact on rural development. In contrast with the mainstream small business growth literature (see Shepher & Wiklund 2005), Atterton and Affleck (2010) argue that even if rural small businesses do not grow, they still play a vital (socio-economic) role in their locality. In our case, we would argue that by offering a variety of services/facilities, touristic and recreation activities and by diversifying the rural economic base, side activities can be of great value for the development of rural areas – regardless of whether the majority of the side activities remain small in scale. Growth is not an imperative.

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7 Contributing to a vibrant countryside? The impact of side activities on rural development

7 Contributing to a vibrant countryside? The impact of side activities on rural development[1]

Abstract

This article focuses on the side activities of non-farmers in rural areas in the Netherlands and more specifically on their impact on rural development. Empirical evidence from 36 Dutch municipalities on three key aspects was examined: *economy*, *social* and *physical environment.* The findings indicate that although side activities do not have a large direct impact on the local economy and employment, their contribution in terms of local collaboration and promoting rural tourism is highly valued. Furthermore, side activities have an important role in building and strengthening social capital in rural communities. Where their impact on physical environment is concerned, side activities are not perceived to damage or alter rural morphology but are considered a reinforcement of the character of rural areas.

7.1 Non-farmers' side activities

Across Western post-modern societies, rural areas are undergoing great economic and social transformations (Dammers & Keiner 2006; EC 2007; O'Connor et al. 2006). Although agriculture is often viewed as the mainstay of the rural economy in many rural parts of Europe, its role is gradually declining, often contributing less than 10 percent to the economy (European Union 2010; Slee 2005; Terluin et al. 2010). The redefinition of agriculture (Marsden 1999) and the shift in the geographical imagination of rurality (as a place to live, work and recreate) (Hadjimichalis 2003) have changed the countryside to a diverse place, making room for non-agricultural consumption functions and creating a new context for rural socio-economic developments.

In the Netherlands, the developments described are also occurring (SER 2005). In the latest OECD Rural Policy Review of the Netherlands (OECD 2008), it is emphasized that these developments will stimulate the 'multifunctional use of rural space', creating room for non-farming uses and building up a broader rural economy not limited to agriculture and the farm household (Herslund 2007). Having said that, Broekhuizen et al. (1997, p. 189) emphasize that 'the countryside is a birth-place of new economic activities' including campsites, farm restaurants, care farms, agrarian childcare services, recreational sites in rural areas, bed and breakfasts or service firms in old farmhouses.

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These new types of economic activity in rural areas are run by rural businesses which do not all operate on a full-time base. Among these businesses there are also part-time small businesses which we call *side activities* and which are usually combined with full-time or part-time paid employment elsewhere or with a pension. Although in general small businesses are meant to provide a main income, side activities as we define them are small-scale, home-based activities, meant to provide only a supplementary household income.

In the light of discussions on rural development and rural renewal, we note that much research has been done on rural small businesses (see Bosworth 2008; North & Smallbone 2006) and on secondary activities carried out by farmers (see Barbieri & Manoney 2009; Van Huylenbroeck et al. 2007), all being part of the 'rural employment diversification' (McNally 2001). However, an under-researched area of study is *side activities* in rural areas carried out by non-farmers.

Although recent rural policies recognize and preserve the multifunctional character of the countryside (OECD 2006), these policies traditionally focus on farmers (see EC 1996; Kinsella et al. 2000; O'Connor et al. 2006). In contrast, the vision of the Agenda for a Vital Countryside (LNV 2004) acknowledges that the rural is changing into an attractive area for non-farm businesses which contribute to the rural economy. Since side activities by definition are income-generating activities, taking place in rural areas, we suggest that they may also play a role in stimulating new economic opportunities and diversifying the economic base of rural areas with activities not directly connected to agriculture, enhancing the vitality of the countryside. It is useful thus to cast light on those activities that have emerged in recent years in the Netherlands (see Markantoni et al. 2010a; Markantoni & Strijker forthcoming).

Hence this article focuses on *side activities of non-farmers* in rural areas and their role in the development of rural communities. As the role of side activities on rural development has not been examined before, this article is exploratory in nature, and it draws on concepts of different aspects of rural development found in literature of farmers and small rural businesses by non-farmers.

The rest of the article is organized as follows. We first identify the key aspects of rural development, presenting a guide to study side activities. Then theoretical considerations are applied to reinforce this analysis. After a description of the methodology and the data, we present the results based on the key aspects of rural development, followed by a discussion and a concluding section.

7.2 Identification of rural development

Although rural development is often understood as a multi-dimensional concept and a multi-facetted process (Van der Ploeg & Roep 2003), there is still no single way of identifying it

and no single coherent position about its definition (Ray 1999). At the very basic level, the classic (post-war) approach to rural development focuses on economic growth, ignoring any social, cultural and environmental qualities of rural areas (exogenous model). However, by the 1970s the emphasis shifted to local needs and circumstances, taking into account social and cultural values as well (endogenous model) (Lowe et al. 1995). In relation to that, Vanclay (2011) argues that rural development extends beyond the traditional economic sphere, encompassing social networks, participating in community activities and the sense of being part of a community (Vanclay 2008), all of which are defining attributes of social well-being and quality of life.

The economic and social notions as identified so far can be found in various studies that try to capture the different dimensions of rural development. For example, Knickel and Renting (2000) differentiate between *material* (economy and employment) and *non-material* aspects (social capital, culture, environment and landscape). A similar distinction is also made by Durand and Van Huylenbroeck (2003), who refer to *commodity* aspects including goods and services and *non-commodity* aspects such as rural way of living, rural landscape and health. Furthermore, Gralton and Vanclay (2009), examining the contribution of artisanal food production, make a distinction between *tangible* aspects which are definable and measurable and *intangible* aspects, such as social interaction with customers, consumer trust and knowledge of the product.

Alongside the economic and social aspects that are put forward to characterize and measure rural development, there is another aspect, which constitutes visual challenges to rural areas, that is, changes in the *physical environment*. The above distinctions made by Knickel and Renting (2000) and Durand and Van Huylenbroeck (2003) also refer, for example, to the landscape and the retention of rural visual qualities as being part of rural development processes.

Economic, social and physical environments, as key themes in rural development, are also highlighted by other studies. Ilbery (1998), for example, summarizes this triad in a theoretical approach of rural development, as *economic*, *social* and *changes in use of rural land.* More specifically in the Netherlands, these themes are also emphasized in a recent rural policy review (OECD 2008), where future developments in rural areas will focus on *rural economy*, *social conditions* as well as *land use and the environment.*[2] Acknowledging the debates surrounding the definition and the different attributes of rural development, our understanding

[2] There are also other developments taking place in rural areas. That is, demographical and political changes as well as environmental sustainability and conservation of nature. However, for the purpose of this study the focus is on the aforementioned three aspects as the key aspects of rural development described in literature.

here is confined to three key aspects, namely *economic*, *social* and *physical environment*, through which the role of side activities is explored.

Next, we set out to elaborate the key aspects of rural development, identified in the literature. This will also set the scene for the analysis of side activities and their economic and non-economic impact on rural development.

7.3 Background considerations

7.3.1 Economic

Several authors have reported that new business formation stimulates economic development and promotes regional growth (Carree & Thurik 2003; Davidsson et al. 1994; Wennekers et al. 2005). More specifically, the rise of new economic activities can result in three main effects relating to economic development: (1) employment, (2) income and (3) economic diversification. In particular the last-mentioned is emphasized in rural development studies (see Barbieri & Mahoney 2009; Herslund 2007). We now discuss each of these effects in more depth.

Empirical evidence shows that new business creation has a positive effect on *employment* generation (Acs & Armington 2004; Audretsch et al. 2001). It is often argued that start-ups create new job opportunities for local residents and reduce unemployment. Especially if these firms prove to be viable, successful and if they expand rapidly, then this is likely to increase employment as well. In contrast, the non-viable and stagnated businesses may ultimately exit, and thus not stimulate economic growth. In rural areas in particular, creating employment is promoted by policy makers as a key element for economic development (OECD 1995). In particular employment diversification (farm and non-farm enterprises) is crucial for rural development, as it stimulates tourism and recreation, new services and the provision of facilities, all of which are the expression of new (urban) societal demands (Herslund 2007).

As well as employment, new business formation may also influence *income* generation. The creation of new job opportunities for local residents not only increases local incomes but often stimulates the local economy and adds to local wealth as well (Atterton & Affleck 2010). Especially in rural areas, small businesses are perceived as generating economic value in their communities, although in general they generate lower income levels compared to their urban counterparts (Henderson 2002). That is often the case in remote and small rural communities, where limited access to resources (e.g. Internet, new technology) and a lack of transportation infrastructure hinder economic growth. Income generation and income levels also depend on new skills and knowledge. In particular, economic activity based on low skills is destined to generate lower wage rates. In contrast, when economic activity is based on new

skills it may generate higher incomes, reflecting the new demand for services, facilities and products (Audretsch & Thurik 2000).

Rural areas, while traditionally dominated by agriculture, are now much more economically *diversified* and multifaceted. Farm and non-farm enterprises accompanied by ancillary services in transport, warehousing, accommodation, catering and tourism, are part of this diversification (see Alsos et al. 2011; Briedenhann & Wickens 2004; Hall et al. 2003). This diversity in rural economic (farm and non-farm) activities has a positive effect on the level of welfare, counteracting depopulation and the decline of rural economies (Koster et al. 2011). Contributing to that, networks among small firms are also part of rural diversification, as they help to boost the rural economy. For example, by means of local collaboration small entrepreneurs can overcome not only scale disadvantages by mobilizing resources, but can also access new sources of information and ideas and so have a better chance of improving their economic performance (Brunori & Rossi 2000).

Side activities in our case, by offering a variety of services, facilities as well as touristic and recreation activities[3] and furthermore by creating networks with other local businesses, may play an important role in diversifying the economic base of rural communities and add to the diversification of employment. We could then expect that by creating new job opportunities and raising incomes for local residents it is possible to influence the rural economy in a positive way.

7.3.2 Social

Social revitalization of rural communities is another building block of rural development. Small-scale rural entrepreneurs contribute to rural development because of the key role they play in strengthening social capital (Lyons 2002; Vitartas 2011). It is partly due to the local networks they create, which increase social interaction among locals (Johannisson 1995) and partly because they use local resources which can strengthen social bonds with the locality, and in that sense become embedded in the region (Jack & Anderson 2002). Another type of rural entrepreneur who is also recognized as an actor for strengthening social capital in rural communities is the farmer (De Vries 1993). The social functionality of farmers (and more often farmers' wives) (Bock 2004) has also been referred to the OECD report (2009, p. 98) where the important role of farmers for the social vitality of their local community is emphasized.

[3] Based on a previous study of side activities in the Netherlands we categorized side activities as follows: tourism and recreation (40%), services and facilities provision (23%), craft and arts (6%), sale of home-grown products (31%) (Markantoni et al. 2010a).

Besides multifunctional farms and small enterprises, we could also expect side activities to contribute towards enhancing social capital in rural communities for a number of other reasons. Firstly, and especially for activities related to tourism and recreation, a high degree of social interaction is generated by these activities which also offer a place where rural residents and visitors meet their social needs. Secondly, because of the variety of different types of services and facilities provided by side activities (see Markantoni et al. 2010a), this could make villages and rural areas in general more attractive places to visit, thereby enhancing the quality of life and social well-being in rural communities.

7.3.3 Physical environment

Changes in the use of rural land and rural buildings are also part of rural development process, which rural folk often perceive as a deterioration of their landscape. Elands and Wiersum (2001) argue that rural development should aim to counter this. First, agriculture as a large land user plays an important role in shaping the landscape (OECD 2009). This is also reflected in studies where most attention has been given to farmers and more lately to pluriactive farmers and their impact (positive and negative) on preserving or altering the qualities of landscape and nature. Several examples of pluriactive farms suggest a positive relationship between farming and the quality of landscape (e.g. afforestation) (Kristensen 1999). In contrast, a Danish study (see Primdahl 1999) showed that farms can also contribute to rapid, 'undesirable' changes in the landscape`, because of the intensification of land use (e.g. intensive planting of hedgerows in open landscapes). Van der Vaart has already demonstrated in 1999 that the continuation of a farm often has a more (negative) impact on buildings than if it is used for residential or business functions.

As well as farms, another 'user' of rural space is the rural small businesses owned by non-farmers. It is often argued that the emergence of new entrepreneurial endeavours changes the shape of the rural landscape and 'rural morphology', contributing to diverse environmental and cultural landscapes, and is often seen endowing a 'spatial quality' on the surroundings (Keen 2004; SER 2005). Especially when entrepreneurs reuse former agricultural buildings for non-agrarian functions, such businesses carry). In contrast, others express their concerns and 'fears' that small businesses in rural areas may 'clutter' the countryside (*verrommeling* in Dutch) as they are often perceived to be a 'morphological deviant', impinging on the landscape, mainly because they are perceived as being discordant with their (agricultural) surroundings (Commissie Ruimtelijke Inrichting en Bereikbaarheid 2011).

In the context of this study, a 'user' of rural space could also be a side activity. This is especially the case for activities that use space (e.g. mini-campsites, tea gardens) and exploit and capitalize on rural qualities (e.g. nature, peace, quietness, healthy environment) for their

functioning. Especially if some side activities are undertaken in former farmhouses, this may prevent these sites from becoming empty - reusing them gives them a new function. However, this does not exclude misuse because some side activities may not retain the initial function of buildings and sites. Last but not least, the impact of side activities on the physical environment could also be important for the spatial-rural policy schemes of local governments. Especially if some side activities become a main source of income, this could have implications for the land-use planning or for specific conditions and rules that these activities have to comply with.

In order to explore the role and the impact of side activities on rural development, in this study, we will examine empirically the extent to which they influence the already mentioned key aspects, *the local economy*, *social life* and *physical environment* of rural areas.

7.4 Methodology and data description

In order to examine the role of side activities in rural development, we gathered information from different group of actors: *owners of side activities*, *local residents, small business owners* in the region and *local authorities*. These were chosen because they are directly involved (owners), or collaborate (local businesses owners) with the side activities, are influenced by them (local businesses), make use of them (local residents) or even make the regulations for them (local authorities). These actors represent not only the direct but also the indirect environment of side activities and can therefore provide us with a complementary understanding of their perceived impact on rural development.

This article synthesizes data gathered in rural areas in the Netherlands in the period 2009-2010. The four aforementioned actors were asked about the potential impact of side activities on rural development. The interpretation of the results should be approached with some measure of caution, as they are based on opinions and perceptions about the role of side activities on rural development. The data collection per actor is described in the following and results are discussed as revealed from the data set (Table 1).

7.4.1 Side activity owners

A larger project conducted in 2009 examined the major characteristics of side activities in 36 municipalities in the Netherlands.[4] The first phase of this project was conducted by means of a survey in order to gain a preliminary understanding of side activities, as no data from other sources were available. During the fieldwork, 506 side activities were identified.[5] From these, 260 complete surveys were collected, resulting in a response rate of 51 percent.

[4] Data from this project are also presented in previous articles: (Markantoni et al. 2010a, 2010b).

The second phase of the project, in 2010, involved qualitative research in which in-depth interviews were carried out with 17 respondents who own and run a side activity in a particular socio-economic and spatial context in the north-east of the Netherlands, the *Veenkoloniën*. The objective was to gain a deeper understanding of side activities in a specific context. During the interviews, respondents were also asked to elaborate on the perceived impact of their activity on the development of the region. Each interview lasted approximately one and a half hours and was recorded, transcribed and coded. More details on this part of the data collection can be found in Markantoni and Van Hoven (2010).

7.4.2 Local residents and local business owners

Additional research was undertaken in two municipalities (Borger-Odoorn and Menterwolde) in the north-east of the Netherlands in order to obtain more insight into the impact of side activities for the development of the region. This included interviews with local business owners and people living near the location where a side activity was carried out. These specific municipalities were chosen because of the relatively high number of side activities reported there (in comparison with other municipalities from the larger project mentioned earlier). Sixteen side activities were found in these municipalities, of which eight were in tourism (4 museums, 3 bed & breakfasts, 1 mini campsite), five in services (dog grooming, a blacksmith, a garden decor shop, vocational training school, weather forecasting station) and four were selling home-grown products (honey, flowers, vegetables and fruit).

Nearby businesses that sold products and services more or less similar to those offered by the side activity were asked to participate in the research. The owners of these businesses were asked in face-to-face semi-structured interviews about competition with the side activities, the impact of promoting local products, and cooperation with other businesses. From of 28 business owners visited, 23 participated (8 supermarkets, 3 florists, 1 museum, 2 greengrocers, 3 campsites, 2 dog grooming businesses, 4 hotels), and 5 refused, stating that they did not have time for the interview or that they did not wish to participate.

7.4.3 Local authorities

Data from the local authorities were gathered into two phases. In the first phase, in-depth interviews were conducted with municipal officers in seven municipalities in the north of the Netherlands[5] in order to gain a first impression of the opinion of local authorities over side activities. The interviews lasted approximately one hour each; they were recorded, coded and analysed. The themes of the interviews were the socio-economic effects of side activities, the

[5] These municipalities are Aa en Hunze, Bellingwedde, Borger-Odoorn, Dongeradeel, Heerenveen, Menterwolde and Meppel.

role of tourism and recreation, landscape and aesthetic impacts, and the distinction between farmers and non-farmers in rural policies.

In the second phase, a survey was sent out to the municipal council of the other 29 Dutch municipalities in the larger project mentioned earlier, which inquired about the socio-economic impact of side activities in their region, whether side activities were included in rural policies and whether distinctions in their policies were made between farmers and non-farmers. The survey was sent by e-mail and a response rate of 59 percent was obtained.

Table 1. Synthesis of data from the four different actors

Side activity owners			**Local authorities**		
Respondents	Type	Municipalities	Respondents	Type	Municipalities
260	Survey	36	18	Survey	18
17	In-depth interviews	9	7	In-depth interviews	7
Similar local businesses in the area			**Local residents**		
Respondents	Type	Municipalities	Respondents	Type	Municipalities
23	Semi-structured interviews	2	84	Survey	2

7.5 Results

In the following section, we explore the perceived impact of non-farmers' side activities on the three key themes of rural development identified earlier: *economic*, *social* and *physical environment*. This is done by synthesizing data from four groups of actors: *owners of side activities*, *local residents, small business owners* and *local authorities*. Our results and discussion underline the perception that although side activities do not seem to have large direct economic impact on the local economy, their contribution in terms of local collaboration and diversifying rural tourism seems to play an important role. Furthermore, and more importantly, side activities were identified as contributing to the social vitality of rural communities, whereas their influence on the physical environment was thought to be limited - they are not perceived as damaging the character of rural areas and rural qualities.

7.5.1 Direct economic impact

First, we start by exploring the impact of side activities on the local rural economy. This can be measured directly by referring to the actual income earned from the side activities and their generation of employment. To gain an indication of their economic magnitude, we asked the owners to specify the annual (net) income earned from carrying out their activities (Table 2).

The majority (92.8%) earn less than EUR 15,000 per year, indicating the supplementary income role of side activities for the household. At the level of the local economy, the contribution of side activities (estimated at EUR 1,075,000, our own database[6]) to the total annual household income in the 36 municipalities (EUR 12 billion; CBS 2007) is 0.009 percent, a figure which does not appear to be significant.

Table 2. Annual net income from side activities (EUR)*

Categories	Respondents (n)	%
<1,000	45	32.3
1,000-5,000	38	27.4
5,000-15,000	46	33.1
>15,000	10	7.2

* n=260, 53% of the respondents completed the income-related question.

In terms of employment generation, the majority of side activity owners are sole traders. They run their activity alone with the help of their spouse (56%), children (12%), friends and volunteers (9%), while just 2 percent hires seasonal personnel. Additionally, if we take a closer look at the growth expectations for the next two years (referring to the period 2010-2012), we observe that 10 percent expect to expand their side activity in terms of hiring employees (Markantoni et al. forthcoming). This implies that with regard to employment creation, side activities will not influence local employment rates to a great extent and as a result will not exert a significant impact on the growth of the local economy. With all this is mind, side activities will not greatly influence the local economy, either as a source of income or in terms of offering employment opportunities to local residents.

7.5.2 Indirect economic impact

As previous data on side activities by non-farmers were not available, this made it difficult to measure further their direct economic magnitude. In order to obtain a more detailed impression of their economic value we looked at indirect ways. What we found is that tourism, as well as the potential collaboration and competition of side activities with other local rural businesses, can tell us something about the indirect economic impact of side activities. These are presented below in detail.

[6] As the income earned from side activities was measured in classes (see Table 2), we calculated the total income at the upper level of each class, maximizing their economic contribution.

Rural tourism

In order to explore the indirect economic impact of side activities on rural development, we first turned to tourism. The side activity owners were first asked in a closed-ended question to evaluate the effect of their activity on tourism. About two-thirds of the side activity owners (151 out of 260) stated that their side activities have a positive impact on tourism, either by attracting tourists or by diversifying the tourism sector. Furthermore, during the in-depth interviews it was emphasized that because side activities are very small in scale and because they provide a particular type of tourist activity (e.g. planetarium, canoe and donkey rental, blacksmith museum), they seem to attract a specific type of client who is in search for an alternative type of tourism. As an illustration, a respondent who owns a holiday home decorated in an old-fashioned grandmothers' style (grootmoeders stijl in Dutch) said:

> We make a particular contribution to tourism and we have a specific clientele. Our guests do not go to a large campsite; they come here specifically for us.

Local residents also perceive that side activities influence tourism positively (57%, n=42). They argue that side activities are not only a way to attract visitors to the village, but also that the owners have a personalized relation with the clients. For example, one respondent spoke about a bed and breakfast as small scale, more personal and nicer than a big hotel. Another respondent acknowledged that the blacksmith museum in the village attracts tourists and contributes to its publicity.

> I notice that people know about the museum. At my work they say, 'Oh! You're from Noordbroek? There's a blacksmith museum there, isn't there?

This quote also illustrates his pride for the village for the presence of the museum which has become part of the village's identity. In contrast, a smaller group of local residents (25.7%, n=19) are neutral about the touristic impact of side activities. They argue that while side activities do not actually attract tourists, some tourists stop by to buy a jar of jam or honey, or they may rent a canoe or visit a small museum. Some also share the opinion that because they are very small-scale activities their impact on tourism is also rather limited.

From the local governments' perspective, 51 percent of municipal officers shared the opinion that side activities have a low impact and limited influence on tourism. However, they also recognized that side activities add a 'little bit' to tourism, as tourists like other consumers patronize local establishments, for example, buy an ice cream or beverages when they are out and about. This slightly positive image is enhanced by the remaining 49 percent of the municipalities that recognize that side activities in general can enhance the tourist and the

recreational sector and are thus perceived as selling points. The above assumes that side activities have an added value for the tourist sector and complement it, albeit on a small scale.

Forms of local collaboration

Besides tourism, we found that local collaboration between businesses also contributes to local economic development. Many side activities collaborate with other local shops and enterprises by utilizing services and facilities. Offering bikes and canoes for rent, running a local museum, providing facilities such as a hairdresser or a pedicure salon, all these open up opportunities for forms of collaboration with other local businesses. Side activities can be of economic advantage to other businesses and they can benefit each other. The quote from the owner of a side activity (group accommodation) is illustrative:

> Small businesses round here – a grocer's shop, a carpenter, a bike shop, these kinds of things – benefit from our business and we from them. The tourist office in the village is happy with our group accommodation here.

Some local business owners are aware that they could indeed benefit from side activities. Hotels (n=3), campsites (n=2), supermarkets (n=4) and one flower shop share the opinion that working together with side activities could strengthen their economic performance. According to the respondents, the fact that some side activities organize, for example, workshops, specific courses or tours for tourists (bike, walks, horse, Christmas and Spring routes[7]) increase demand for certain goods. This suggests that other enterprises may benefit directly and indirectly from some side activities. These effects are referred to in the literature as multiplier effects (see Knickel & Renting 2000).

We could therefore expect that if side activities collaborate with other local businesses, they would probably be able to attract more tourists and visitors, and as a result strengthen each other's economic performance (positive external effects). In that sense, side activities are perceived as active agents in their local communities, and collaboration with other businesses shows that they are being taken 'seriously' by other regular local businesses. Side activities seem to contribute to the infrastructure needed to provide an attractive countryside for both the tourism sector and rural residents themselves.

[7] A notable example is the Christmas and Spring route in the village of Kiel-Windeweer in the north-east of the Netherlands. Twice a year a group of ten small entrepreneurs (side activities, farmers and other local businesses) in order to promote their businesses organize additional activities related to Christmas and Spring, including live music and serving traditional soup and beverages, which attract many visitors to the village.

Competition

Competition between side activities and rural local business, while it has improved the economic performance of some businesses, is regarded by other businesses as a negative factor.

In the first place, some businesses share the perception that competition with side activities is 'unfair'. Some local business owners (30%, n=7) argue that side activities are not registered properly, do not possess the necessary permits and do not meet the legal requirements (e.g. hygiene, fire extinguishing systems), and this enables them to offer lower prices. An interesting point is that the smaller the range of products/services provided by a shop/business, the more competition the side activity is considered to offer. The owner of a flower shop (narrow range of products) perceives a nearby side activity that also sells flowers as a competitor:

> It is always competitive. If people buy flowers from such activities, they will not buy them from me. For me it is always a damage.

This 'unfair' situation could also be connected to the negative impact of competition, which ultimately forces prices downwards (leading to bankruptcy) and which means that business owners have to work harder to avoid this outcome (Schmidt 1997). In that sense, side activities may not positively affect rural economic growth.

In contrast, some other business owners believe that side activities attract a different type of clientele and are good initiatives for the development of the region (48%, n=11). Furthermore, they think that side activities could strengthen each other's economic performance by providing economic diversity. Others set the precondition that side activities should remain small scale, otherwise they would become 'serious' competitors. To quote a small business owner (groceries shop - wide range of products):

> As long as they are small scale, I do not think they are a competition. I think that they have about 10 to 20 clients per day. This is a specific type of customer. I do not think that they can find what they want at my shop, and that is why they go to such a place.

From the point of view of the local governments, the vast majority (94.4%) do not perceive side activities as unfair competitors with other established businesses in the region. Some argue that their specific policies help to prevent unfair competition, whilst others mention that side activities aim for a different type of client, who looks for a small-scale and personalized relation with business owners. However, a small group (5.6%) recognize that the costs for these activities are lower than for other businesses and they consider them unfair competitors.

We can thus conclude that although side activities are perceived to be detrimental to some local businesses, on the other hand they are also recognized as economic actors in their locality, because they improve performance and hence local stimulate economic development. Partly, this can be explained from their small scale of operation, the diverse products and services they offer and partly because they seem to attract a specific type of clientele.

7.5.3 Social impact

Leaving aside the direct and indirect impact of side activities on the local economy, we now turn to their emerging social benefits for the visitors and more broadly for the village.

Side activities, such as a mini campsite, a holiday home, pick-your-own fruit, a glass studio or a tea garden, can function as a place where people can meet other people and spend their time. This is a place where they can socialize and enter into a more personal relationship with the owner and other residents in the region. As many owners mentioned during the in-depth interviews (7 out of 17), side activities, because of their rural location (e.g. quiet, remote, close to nature) and their small size, attract visitors and customers who are searching for a place to rest, relax and escape their daily routine. According to the owner of a glass studio:

> You relax here. I have clients who have a very busy and stressful job, then I notice that they cheer up completely here and forget their daily worries.

Other side activity owners mentioned that people visit them to fulfil their social needs (n=12). A respondent who has a dog-grooming salon even described herself as providing a *'*listening ear*'*, illustrating the social role of her side activity. Something we often came across during the interviews is how the owners talk about the personal attention they devote to their customers and guests. They focus on being friendly and building a personal relationship with the customers: 'we do it differently from others', said one respondent when he was talking about a bigger holiday park in the region. Another respondent mentioned that what people like most is their 'openness and the easy-going atmosphere they create'. The high level of personal interaction between hosts and guests in particular is often found in small accommodation providers and 'home-like' forms of accommodation (Lynch & Tucker 2004).

In response to a question about the social functionality of side activities, the local governments expressed the view that these activities make a significant contribution to the social vitality of the rural, are a 'meeting point' or even lead to better social cohesion in their rural communities (44.5%), while the half (50%) believed that their contribution is rather small.

The importance of side activities is thus not only reflected in the material and economic

sphere but more importantly in the socio-psychological well-being of the people who make use of the services offered. It seems that side activities offer a place to relax, cheer up as well as opportunities for socializing, all important attributes for quality of life and social well-being. We could argue consequently that side activities are important for building social capital and activating social vitality in rural communities even if they are very small in scale. Their smallness function here an advantage than a disadvantage.

7.5.4 Physical environment

Besides economic and social aspects of rural development, we also examined the impact of side activities in relation to their role in altering or preserving the physical environment. Local governments in general expressed concerns about the impact of side activities on the landscape and their aesthetic effect. The municipalities most concerned with the negative effect of side activities on the landscape appeared to be pessimistic about their economic value. Some municipalities then (72%, n=13), have set preconditions on side activities, that they should not 'clutter' the countryside by putting up big road signs, or disturb the peace and charm of the countryside, and that they should fit in with the surroundings, stay small scale and be subject to regular checks. For example, the municipality of Bellingwedde has forbidden random signposts or advertisements by the roadside (e.g. eggs/jam/honey for sale) and has obliged operators of such activities to apply for a permit.

In contrast, 38.9 percent of the municipalities are more positive about the impact of side activities on the landscape. This latter group is generally of the opinion that side activities positively influence the attractiveness of the region and fit in well with the environment. An important question then arises as to how rural areas can provide economically and socially viable living environments whilst keeping their visual qualities intact. It is likely that some side activities will be relatively unobtrusive, or will enhance rural qualities by altering the landscape or by preserving cultural and historical values, for example.

To study this further, owners, especially those whose activities require space – part of the garden or backyard (e.g. tea garden, mini campsite) – were asked about the influence of their side activities on the rural landscape. A respondent who owns a tea garden talks about how his side activity has transformed the former open agricultural land into a tea garden (see Figure 1):

> It adds value to the landscape. When we first came here there was just arable land on both sides. I planted many trees, because it was an 'open' agricultural area here.

However, municipalities have different views. Some are cautious about possibility of side activities 'cluttering' the countryside, while others are more positive about it. Therefore, the impact of side activities on the physical environment is still a contested issue.

Figure 1. A tea garden side activity (Source: M.Markantoni)

Side activities also appeared to play a role in preserving former farmhouses. Some for example, reuse former farmhouses or agricultural buildings for their operation. Owners mentioned that by operating a side activity from such a location, they enhance the cultural and historical significance of their village. They argued that they add vitality and preserve empty farms and that the real estate value of other houses in the area has gone up. Municipalities were also positive about the impact of side activities on the preservation of former buildings (83.3%). They believe that side activities can protect the authenticity of the farm, give the farm a new function, and even prevent farms and surrounding properties from becoming vacant. The reuse of former farms for side activities can thus be of great importance when it comes to enhancing rural qualities. As such, side activities are not intrusive but rather can help preserve the character of rural areas.

Taken the foregoing into account, the broader impact of side activities on altering or preserving the rural identity is much contested. Although owners argue that their side activities add value to the landscape, at the same time there are many concerns expressed with regards to their role in altering the rural identity and 'changing' the countryside.

7.6 Conclusions

This article has sought to understand the impact of side activities on different aspects of rural development. In terms of the economic impact of side activities on rural development, this was found to be very small. It is mainly in terms of local collaboration that side activities have a somewhat positive impact, as they enhance and diversify the rural economic base and also contribute to the economic infrastructure mainly related to the tourist sector.

However, the importance of side activities is reflected not so much in economic terms (<0.009% of the municipal income) but more importantly in their role in strengthening and promoting social vitality in rural areas, even if they are very small-scale activities. In that sense, side activity entrepreneurs can act as local leaders who play an important role in building social capital in their rural communities. It is precisely their *smallness* that is their strong point, as it enables them to enjoy a closer and more personal relationship with their customers and visitors. This is also a defining attribute of social well-being and quality of life.

As far as the impact of side activities on the physical environment is concerned, side activities are perceived differently by various actors, making this a much contested issue. Some believe that especially the very small-scale activities in particular do not seem to damage the landscape but are in general perceived to influence the character of rural areas positively; this applies in particular to the activities that reuse former farmhouses and agricultural buildings. This is also in line with Daalhuizen et al. (2003) who argue that entrepreneurial endeavours by former farmhouses have positive effects such as the diversification of the rural economy and the preservation of cultural and historical values. However, many municipalities express concerns and doubts about the landscape and the aesthetic impact of such activities. Side activities, because they are very small, home-based and because their owners do not possess big pieces of land or big barns – as opposed to farmers – are not perceived as damaging the local environment unless they expand beyond the direct vicinity of the house. Therefore, we argue that local authorities should not be immediate concerned about a negative impact on the landscape or draw up regulations to prevent their start-up. Instead, they should appreciate the role of side activities in building social capital, adding value to rural tourism and to the diversity of the local economy; all these elements are emphasized in the Agenda for a Vital Countryside (LNV 2004). Nevertheless, it is important to mention that rural policies are linked to the specific local context and cultures of the municipalities, which were not taken into account in this study, as our goal was to obtain a collective overview of side activities in the Netherlands. The subject deserves further examination.

There are several implications for further research. First, this study has highlighted the perceived impact of side activities on rural development. A more specific regional/contextual approach would be the logical continuation to this research and would therefore provide a significant contribution. This article is a step in this direction. The synthesis of various types of data has enabled us to demonstrate not only the direct and indirect economic importance of side activities in diversifying the local economy, but also their role in building and strengthening social capital. This illustrates the potential role of side activities in diversifying rural economies and contributing to a vibrant countryside.

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8 Conclusions

8 Conclusions

This dissertation explored the side activities of non-farmers in rural areas in the Netherlands. We examined the role and importance of side activities for their owners (personal level) and the broader implications in terms of diversifying and revitalizing rural economies and improving the quality of life and wellbeing in rural areas (regional level). With a combination of different data and methods, we explored how and why side activities emerge (i.e. start-up motives, factors that played a role in their initiation), the types of activities, the growth aspirations of their practitioners and their broader impact on rural development.

8.1 Side activities: Between economic and non-economic benefits

Side activities in general contribute to economic, social and environmental outcomes in the rural communities in which they are located. The impact and role of side activities are visible both at the regional and the personal level.

At the *regional level*, this study has shown that the direct economic impact of side activities on the rural economy is minor. Although small entrepreneurs in general are considered to improve the rural economy and provide a vital source of employment (Atterton & Affleck 2010; Newbery & Bosworth 2010), this is not empirically supported for side activities. In particular, their growth adversity in combination with the low income generation and limited job creation show the limited economic capacity of side activities. It is more in indirect than in direct terms that side activities can influence the rural economy, mainly by diversifying rural activities.

Side activities, although small, home-based activities with low direct economic importance, play a more important role in strengthening and activating social vitality in rural areas. Precisely their smallness functions as an advantage. Side activities offer a place to socialize and help to fulfill social needs, not only for their founders but for customers from outside the region and for local residents. Especially because side activities operate on a small scale, they promise a close and personal relationship with the people who visit them. In that sense side activity entrepreneurs may act as 'local leaders' who can induce positive development impacts by enhancing social wellbeing in rural communities.

Turning now to the *personal level*, the empirical results suggest that side activities play an important role in improving the quality of life and wellbeing of individuals. Previous studies on rural entrepreneurship and rural development in developed countries have consistently shown the crucial role entrepreneurship can play in the daily lives, identities and needs of individuals and families (Aldrich & Cliff 2003; Bridge et al. 2003; Buttner & Moore 1997). Similarly, side activities are also found to play a prominent role in the everyday lives of their

owners in many respects. First, this study shows that through practising side activities, people can achieve a 'qualitative growth'. That is, personal development, enrichment, self-realization and enjoyment, all defining features of quality of life and wellbeing. Furthermore, many side activity entrepreneurs also appear to be in search of a healthy balance between personal, family and work life, to become able to maintain or perpetuate a 'rural' lifestyle and live in an appraisable environment via their side activities. What is also interesting in this study is the fact that side activities owners mainly reflected on needs related to personal and household circumstances and not so much to financial returns. Therefore, we could say that people are able to align their entrepreneurial activities to fit personal or household circumstances and their style of life. In conclusion:

The importance of side activities is valued more in terms of non-economic than economic returns.

In the following sections we elaborate on these main conclusions and define what we consider a side activity. Furthermore, we focus on the role and importance of side activities for the individual (personal level) and more broadly for rural development (regional level). We do so by discussing start-up motives – the factors that played role in their initiation, including the satisfaction and struggles resulting from running a side activity – their potential growth and the broader implications of side activities for the development of rural communities. Then we continue with main policy implications and conclude with future directions and recommendations for new studies of side activities.

8.2 Side activities by non-farmers

In this dissertation we define a side activity as a home-based activity, which provides a supplementary income at the household level. Two main elements are important to emphasize here. The first is that side activities provide a secondary and not a main source of income for the household, and the second is that this study focused on non-farmer entrepreneurs. These two elements are elaborated below.

As previous empirical material or a conceptual framework for non-farmers' side activities was absent, side activities in this study were conceptualized as a complement to the secondary activities of farmers (i.e. pluriactivity) and as a special case for small businesses (i.e. micro-businesses, home-based businesses). Here we have to mention that the term side activity was introduced by the researcher, not by the respondents. It is important to reiterate that although the term side activity suggests an activity of minor importance, this is not automatically the perception of those starting up and running these enterprises. For them, side activities often

comprise an important part of their lives and they are often not perceived as something 'side'. A quote from one respondent is illustrative: 'that word "side" always implies that it is something aside, but it is not, it is my small business'.

The focus of this study is not only on the secondary income potential of side activities but also on the fact that these activities are operated by non-farmer entrepreneurs. In general, although rural development is dominated by the secondary activities of farmers, this study reveals that in number there are more non-farmer than farmer side activities. In particular, in the research area (36 Dutch municipalities), 506 non-farmer and 269 farmer side activities were found, indicating the large number of non-farmer rural residents who undertake an extra activity at their rural home in addition to their main source of income. We can thus conclude that non-farmer side activities make up an important proportion of the small activities found in rural areas.

8.3 The trigger to start a side activity

Hierarchy of needs

Side activity owners are mainly driven by non-economic benefits, and generating an income is an afterthought. The owners were inspired by motives related to personal development and growth, the need for reconnection with the value of life, being able to find a balance between work/life and family quality time, as well as the desire for the freedom to work on their own terms.

Based on the fact that side activities by definition do not provide a main but an extra income for a household, it was expected that when starting a side activity, the main trigger would not be based on economic but on lifestyle considerations (Chapter 3). By casting light on what triggers people to start a side activity in rural areas, three main categories of motives were found to influence the decision: (1) individual aspirations and pursuits, (2) economic wellbeing and independence, and (3) rurality and lifestyle. The first indicates a personal nature with motivations related to the individual, such as personal growth, meeting a challenge and aspiring to better quality of life. The second is related to financial considerations and independence, and the third is associated with the desire to live in a rural environment with specific resources around (Chapter 4).

The fact that lifestyle is an important start-up motive was reiterated during the in-depth interviews. Most side activity owners were found to be looking for an activity that brings them pleasure, permits them to express their talents and passions, gives them the opportunity to work outdoors, to socialize and also to realize a desired lifestyle. What is also interesting in this study is the fact that side activities appealed to those seeking to combine domestic and business activities, offering them flexibility in work and/or family life (Chapter 5).

From the above, it is clear that the respondents reflected mainly upon personal aspirations, needs to fit personal circumstances and a desired lifestyle and not on maximizing financial returns. This non-financial orientation is also reflected on the growth adversity of side activities (see also 8.5). The results coincide with motives found in various studies in the small business context (see Greenbank 2001), in rural entrepreneurship (see Atterton & Affleck 2010), agritourism firms (see McGehee & Kim 2004) and also in lifestyle-oriented small tourism firms (see Morrison et al. 2008). If we compare the non-farmer group with farmer entrepreneurs (see Hendriksen & Klaver 1995), we observe that they do not differ much in terms of motivations for starting side activities (Markantoni & Strijker forthcoming). The difference is mainly ascribed to the availability of resources. For example, farmers normally have more land, while non-farmers sometimes have specific knowledge and skills.
Concluding from the above discussion, to side activity owners, earning some income is of secondary importance (see also the definition of side activities). This can be partly explained by what Maslow describes as the hierarchy of human needs (1943), where there are two main types of needs areas, basic survival and security needs, and higher social and personal needs. Once the basic needs have been fulfilled it is a natural progression to move to the next area in the hierarchy. At this point, it should be emphasized that side activity owners are in general in the fortunate position of economic security. Some of them have a full-time working partner, or have their own jobs in addition to the side activity, and they thus do not depend on making a living from it. Therefore, for most side activity owners it is not a prerequisite to make a living from these businesses. However, the need to start a side activity depends also on the specific regional context and on when the side activities are conducted, both of situation.

First, this study reveals that the specific geographical context plays an important role in the initiation of many side activities. The qualitative study which can shape where the individual is situated in the hierarchy of human needs. Perhaps at another time and place the motives and needs of side activities owners could have been different.

Enabling side activities

Initiating a side activity is a complex and multidimensional process depending on the *specific geographical context* where the activity will take place and also on a *set of factors and circumstances* that trigger people to start, which in general are considered to be predicated on the founder's personal and household conducted in the Veenkoloniën – a Dutch rural area in decline in the northeast of the Netherlands – revealed that by providing space, quiet, rurality and also relatively low house prices when compared to other regions in the Netherlands, the region was an enabling factor for starting a side activity (Chapter 5). However, many respondents only realized the opportunities that this area offered them after they moved to the Veenkoloniën, for example by using part of their gardens, their garages, an extra room in their

homes, or by renovating an old barn. Although the respondents may not have moved to this region if they could have afforded a more expensive house elsewhere, they converted the regional disadvantage to an advantage by initiating a side activity and exploiting its rural qualities, space and affordable housing. This was also reflected in a small quantitative research project into two municipalities in the Netherlands, Aa en Hunze and Borger-Odoorn, where no case was found in which moving to the new place was triggered by the opportunity to develop a side activity (Tennekes & Veerman 2009).

Apart from the geographical context, the trigger to start up a side activity is also embedded in personal and household circumstances. Elaborating on this, the multifunctional home appeared to be an important part in the realization of side activities. By providing space for their business and combining side activities with everyday organizational tasks (e.g. children, work and domestic duties), home functions as a mixed space. This combination of home with business space helped many respondents to address organizational problems otherwise incurred when trying to combine household, care work and paid work. Therefore, this multifunctional home facilitates the pursuit and continuity of family life and lifestyle. Furthermore, the support of the partner and more broadly of the family is experienced as an important factor for the realization of side activities. Often, the family functioned as a 'business asset' (see also Morrison 2006). Support from the family is valued as an inextricable part of the side activity through the resolution of everyday organizational issues, voluntary contribution to the side activity, to work and to emotional tasks at home.

The support of the family in combination with a major life transition (e.g. marriage, infertility, parenthood) also form a basis for the decision-making process and open up the opportunity for many rural inhabitants to start a side activity. Side activities in general were part of a broader process of changing the personal lifestyle of the owners. We thus argue that the rural setting and the family/personal situation are crucial for the realization of side activities (Chapters 4 and 5). Here we have to emphasize that individuals often mentioned that side activities, because they are small-scale and home-based activities, were easy to start as the financial barriers to entry were in general low. These low entry thresholds minimized the financial risks and often functioned as a trigger to start-up a side activity at home.

8.4 Satisfaction and struggles

The discussion reveals that side activities meet a wide range of needs, including personal, family, social and economic needs. However, having a side activity does not always deliver what it promises. It can also be a real struggle, caused by the need for constant availability and the merging of the side activity with household tasks and roles. In addition to personal

struggles, side activity founders also confront various problems stemming from regulations and permits required by local authorities (see also 8.6).

The interviews conducted as part of this study reveal that side activities are generally experienced very positively and satisfy their owners. For instance, through practising a side activity, people can express their talents and passions, work outdoors and also contribute to social needs. As stated before, personal enrichment and independence have also been reported as benefits, implying that side activities fulfil dreams, improve quality of life and help in the achievement of a preferred lifestyle.[1]

Part of the benefits of running a side activity is also the opportunity to meet people and psychological gratification through hosting and visitor satisfaction, for instance (see Morrison 2006). Side activity owners, especially women, emphasized that they ran side activities in order to make others happy and to offer them a pleasant time. This rewards the owners with a feeling of pleasure and personal satisfaction. This is often described as psychological income (pleasure) derived from the interaction with people (also found in research on multifunctional farmers, see De Vries 1993 and Jongeneel et al. 2008), implying that side activities contribute to the subjective wellbeing of their owners, and also of their visitors. The need of women to please and make others happy complements previous studies in the tourism and service sectors, where women are engaged in activities related to caring and hospitality (see Reijonen 2008).

Running a side activity does not only result in gains and satisfactions, it is also often accompanied by struggles. The home, although it was experienced as a convenient place for running side activities, also presents some disadvantages. The continuous availability of the owners to their families and their customers was often expressed as a potential problem. Although they often separated the side activities space and the private space with visual boundaries, some respondents did find it difficult to establish rigorous borders between their home and business lives. This results in a merged space, where personal life is mixed and blurred with business life.

Starting a side activity often entails a great investment, sometimes financially but always in personal free time. The owners often have fulltime jobs, household tasks and/or childcare duties, meaning that they have to develop and operate their side activities in combination with other everyday tasks. As stated earlier, the roles of the partner and of other family members play an important role, providing encouragement and supporting them financially, emotionally and psychologically.

[1] The benefits earned from practising a side activity also functioned as the triggers that motivated people to start them. There is thus an overlap between benefits and satisfaction and start-up motives.

In addition to struggles at the personal and household levels, side activity owners often struggle with many municipal rules. These are often perceived as unclear, first because most side activity owners did not know which rules applied to them, and second because many municipalities do not clearly refer to side activities in their policies. Starting a side activity often means that the owners have to comply with a range of regulations and permits (e.g. specific permits for hygiene, fire extinguishing systems, alcohol consumption, construction and demolition, sewage systems, specific regulations for campsites/B&B and also for parking spaces, landing stages and roadside signs).[2] During the in-depth interviews many respondents expressed their frustration at the municipal regulations they have to comply with. They argue that these rules are often vague as some municipalities do not specify side activities in their policies and that they are treated as medium-sized enterprises. Furthermore, it was often stated that the costs attached to these rules are high for their small business and unnecessary as side activities are not fully-fledged businesses.

As a result, many owners perceive the role of municipalities in the development of their region as 'two-faced'. To quote one respondent: 'the municipality on the one hand wants to stimulate small entrepreneurs in the village, while at the same time they have many rules attached to them to prevent them'. This call for a more detailed assessment of the role municipalities can play in stimulating rural enterprise.

8.5 To grow or not to grow a side activity?

An overarching question that emerges is whether side activities contribute to rural economic development. The growth aspirations of the side activity owners reveal that there is a small group of owners who do intend to expand their side activity, meaning that they can have a positive direct impact on local economic development. The majority, however, are not growth motivated as they prioritise non-economic and quality-of-life values over economic rewards.

The analyses in this study suggest that the majority of side activity owners (72%) will not expand their activities but are more likely to continue to operate at a small scale (Chapter 6). This is also in line with the small business literature, where in general small firms start small, live small and die small (Greenbank 2001; Storey 1994). With respect to rural small business growth studies (Atterton & Affleck 2010; Raley & Moxey 2000), the argument that growth is not the main purpose is also empirically proved for side activities, implying that side activities behave in that respect like small rural firms. This is not surprising if we consider that in many

[2] From a spatial planning perspective at the local level, in the Netherlands there are many regulations on zoning that are not easy to change. Zoning regulations contain provisions that have binding norms limiting the freedom of space-use by individuals. For side activities that means that the home cannot automatically be used for commercial uses as it is designated for dwelling purposes. Specific permits have to be applied for, such as building permits or operation licenses.

rural areas, the size, the remoteness and the many institutional deficiencies often appear to influence a persons' intention to expand his/her business.

Another plausible explanation for this limited growth orientation is based on the fact that side activity owners do not need to make a living from their activities. This non-economic orientation shows that the owners lack the urge to transform their side activities into main sources of income and this is also reflected in their non-economic start-up motives. Finally, side activity growth also seems to be constrained by their attachment to the family home and the fact that growth may eventually mean the loss of their 'smallness'. This smallness of income generation, need for space, employees and the size of the market seem to be consciously preserved by the side activity owners.

In contrast, there are also cases (about a quarter of all cases) where individuals put more emphasis on economic rewards, which can in turn lead them to have a more positive impact on the rural economy and the physical environment of rural areas. This desire for growth, however, does not tell us anything about their future profits or whether they will be successful, and therefore no immediate conclusions can be drawn about their real future development. What we do know, though, is that this specific group is expecting to invest more personal time in the activity and to establish collaborations and networks with other small businesses in the region. Concerning the use of land/space, side activities are not expected to expand, possibly because some of the owners may already possess enough land/space and expanding is not within their main goals. Furthermore, although it is well supported in theory that small firms make a major contribution to job creation, this is not empirically supported for side activities (Chapter 6).

The question of whether to grow or not to grow is not simple to answer, since it depends on (1) the individual, (2) the side activity's characteristics and (3) the external environment. More specifically, this study reveals that factors predicting the growth desire of side activities depend on start-up motives related to the personal growth and the economic wellbeing of the individual.[3] These motives play an especially prominent role in predicting growth expectations. In addition to start-up motives, individual characteristics such as age and gender are also significantly associated with growth intentions. Age was found to be significant and negatively associated with growth. The younger the owner the more he/she is expected to pursue growth. Gender is also significantly associated with growth expectations. Men are found to be more prone to pursue growth than women. Therefore, internal factors including

[3] We initially included the two selection criteria, touristic and start-up entrepreneurial rates in the regression model (see Chapter 2, methodology). However, they did not appear to be significant or explain the model, therefore we excluded them. A possible explanation could be that people did not take the fact that they live near a tourist or an entrepreneurial area into consideration. They seem to base their motives on personal needs and individual aspirations.

personal characteristics and start-up motives stand out as being particularly significant to growth. These are particularly difficult to change or implement in active policy structures with respect to the future growth of side activities.

8.6 Side activities and rural development

Side activities play an important role not only for the individual, but are also relevant for the development of rural areas with respect to *economic development*, *social revitalization* and the *physical environment* (see Chapter 7).

Rural economic development

Although it is generally argued that small businesses help to improve the rural economy (Atterton & Affleck 2000), this study found that the direct rural economic impact of side activities is small. Although the direct impact of side activities on the rural economy is small, side activities have an important indirect economic value. There are two aspects related to that. The first refers to rural tourism development. Side activities are perceived as having a positive impact either by attracting tourists or by diversifying the tourist sector with activities not directly related to agriculture. Secondly, side activities seem to be highly valued by local businesses as they are perceived to enhance each other's economic performance through collaborations. However, not all local businesses are happy with the side activities. Small shops in particular perceive them as serious competitors, arguing that side activities are detrimental to their business as there is 'unfair' competition. In contrast, bigger local shops do not think that side activities will damage them; they believe that they can benefit from side activities as they promote economic diversity in the region.

Rural social revitalization

The importance of side activities is reflected not only in direct and indirect economic terms but also in their role of strengthening social vitality in rural areas. Although the owners of side activities did not particularly emphasize social motives as their start-up reasons, at a later stage they acknowledge their social contribution. Side activity entrepreneurs can be seen as 'strong actors' in rural development, contributing to the socio-psychological wellbeing of the people who visit them. Based on the respondents' stories, people visit side activities for the coziness they create and also to give them the opportunity to socialize. Furthermore, recent research in a small village (Kiel-Windeweer) in the Veenkoloniën (see Markantoni et al. 2011) revealed that side activities also play an important role for elderly people in rural areas, offering them a safe and quiet place to spend their time but also an affordable place which they could not find elsewhere.

Side activities thus play an important role in activating social vitality in rural communities, even if they operate on a small scale. Precisely their smallness is their strong point as the owners enjoy a closer and personal relationship with their customers, which is also a defining attribute of social wellbeing and quality of life.

Physical environment

Side activities in general barely affect the landscape and the physical environment. On the contrary, they are primarily perceived as positively influencing the character of rural areas. The latter applies especially to the activities that reuse former farmhouses, as they preserve the cultural values and the authenticity of the farms (see also Daalhuizen et al. 2003). A small study on farmer's side activities in the municipality Midden Drenthe also revealed that side activities do not change or damage the landscape, as they are barely visible and fit well with the surroundings (Bakker 2007).

However, the impact of side activities on the environment is much contested. Local authorities have divergent opinions. Some are cautious and express concerns about the landscape and the aesthetic impact of such activities, as their 'duty' to preserve the region's rural identity and its 'morphological sense' comes to the fore. Other municipalities set some preconditions, stating that side activities should not 'clutter' the countryside and disturb the countryside but should mesh harmoniously with the local environment. In contrast, there are some municipalities which are more positive about the role side activities can play in preserving the natural environment in which they are located.

Although is difficult to gauge accurately the impact of side activities on the physical environment, we would argue that side activities generally do not seem to spoil the environment, because they are small, home-based, growth averse and their owners do not use large areas of land or large barns – as professional farmers do – unless they outgrow the vicinity of the house, but this seldom happens. Therefore, there does not seem to be much reason for local authorities to have immediate concerns about a negative impact on the landscape or to draw up regulations to prevent them. These concerns and emerging policy implications for side activities are further elaborated in the following section.

8.7 Judgment from policy perspectives

As was briefly discussed earlier, many side activity owners perceive that local authorities do not facilitate entrepreneurial activities and in fact hamper further development in their localities through unnecessary regulation. To examine the role of local authorities in the development of side activities, we took a closer look at current municipal policies.

Current policies on side activities by non-farmers are unclear, revealing a mixed and vague picture of regulation for side activities. These policies are tied up with the local circumstances and the political culture of each local government, making the situation even more unclear (Averink et al. 2009). Many municipalities (58%) have specific policies concerning side activities (e.g. a land-use plan, and rules concerning catering and hospitality services or hygiene). Other municipalities do not have clear policies or are not expecting to include side activities in their rural policy schemes, mainly because they perceive them as very small activities with no impact on rural economic development. Thus, the role of municipalities is not conclusive as it depends on the regional context and on specific regulations which vary depending on the situation.

Comparing farmers with non-farmer entrepreneurs with a side activity, this study reveals that many municipal policies differentiate between the two. The majority of municipalities make a clear distinction (81%). They stimulate and support farmers to start a side activity on the farm, while non-farmer rural residents have so far been neglected and invisible in rural policies and are not taken into account, although they make up the majority of side activities in rural areas. This implies that farmer entrepreneurs are still considered the main rural economic agents and are encouraged to start up an extra activity in addition to their farm enterprise, whereas non-farmers do not receive as much encouragement to initiate a side activity.

A closer look at the future growth of side activities suggests that side activities are not a threat to the physical environment and the character of the countryside. That is because the majority do not intend to expand and because many owners have enough land and space in their possession to practise their side activities. Therefore, municipalities should not be afraid that side activities will 'clutter' the countryside and that they are a threat to the landscape. However, attention should be paid to those entrepreneurs with clear growth intentions because growing an activity could imply more buildings and bigger roadside signs. We would argue that municipalities should evaluate the growth of side activities on an individual basis to judge whether they threaten the physical environment, rather than judging them all collectively.

Our main message here is that policymakers and local action groups in general need to become aware of the potential contribution of side activities to rural revitalization and especially to strengthening social capital, as shown previously and not to be afraid that side activities will spoil the character of rural areas and the physical environment.

8.8 Future directions

This study has thrown light on side activities that have slowly but relatively invisibly emerged in the Netherlands. As the objective of this study was to gain insight into side activities (i.e.

motives, growth intentions and impact on rural development), the study did not focus on a specific geographical area. This implies that the results cannot directly be used for interpretations about a particular situational and geographical context (e.g. socioeconomic characteristics, characteristics of rural areas). An exception to this is the small study conducted in the Veenkoloniën. There indeed it was found that the region plays a role as an enabling factor. It would therefore be interesting to repeat similar research in other regions to check for regional similarities and differences.

Moreover, and since this study has examined growth expectations, it would have been a logical continuation to measure the difference between growth intentions and actual realization. This could provide insights into the potential development of side activities. This could have broader implications for the socioeconomic development of rural areas.

Another addition to this study would be to go beyond the borders of the Netherlands and compare our results with other countries, thus embracing an even wider range of cultural and geographical contexts. What characterizes the research area of this study is the relatively highly urbanized countryside of the Netherlands, meaning that cities are more easily accessible from rural areas than in other rural parts of Europe. Although we have some empirical evidence that there are side activities by non-farmers in southern Europe (Vos 2009),[4] it would be of great value to know whether the side activities of non-farmers could also be found elsewhere, with different intensities of rurality (e.g. remote areas). For instance, at what intensity do side activities appear, what types of side activities are there, are there other types of motives in different geographical and socio-cultural contexts? Such a comparison would provide an in-depth understanding of side activities and their broader impact on the economic and social regeneration of rural communities in different parts of Europe.

This study is the first to examine the 'invisible' side activities of non-farmers. First, by examining the role of side activities at the personal level, side activities were found to comprise an important part of the needs, lifestyles and identities of their founders. Individuals are inspired not so much by economic growth but by needs associated with 'qualitative' growth, i.e. personal growth, independence, enrichment, enjoyment and the desire to follow a particular style of life. By setting aside economic gains and prioritising the value of the family, individuals limit their material needs to better achieve personal and family-oriented goals.

This study has also enabled us to demonstrate not only the role of side activities for the individual and the family as a whole, but their impact and role on rural development. We concluded that although side activities in general do not have a great direct impact on the

[4] This study may function as a pilot study for further research to compare with our results in the Netherlands.

local economy and employment, their contribution in terms of local collaborations and for diversifying the tourist sector is highly valued. We would further argue that by diversifying the economic base of rural areas and offering a variety of activities, side activities can be of great value to the development of rural communities. Side activities in their own distinct way, embedded in local communities, not only embody the entrepreneurial spirit and diversify rural economies but also act as catalysts in strengthening and promoting social vitality by improving the quality of life and enhancing social wellbeing in rural areas.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Survey

Appendix 2: In-depth interviews guide

Appendix 3: Touristic areas in the Netherlands

Appendix 4: Side activities per category and subcategory

Appendix 1. Survey

Section I. Side activity – Motivations

1	What is the name of your side activity?	
2	Please enter the address of your side activity	Street/ house number Postal code, City
3	Who started the side activity?	Husband Wife Children Parents Other family members
4	Who runs the side activity?	Husband Wife Children Parents Other family members
5	In which category does your side activity fit?	1. Tourism 2. Recreation activities 3. Sale of own products 4. Art, antiques and curiosa 5. Service sector 6. Other
6	Who are your main customers?	Local residents Tourists/visitors Other
7	When did you start this side activity?	
8	Did you have a side activity before?	1. Yes, 2. No
9	What was your main motive to start your side activity?	
10	How many hours per week do you spend on your side activity?	
11	Who else is involved in the side activity?	1. Spouse 2. Children 3. Employee 4. Other 5. No one

12	Which of the following resources do you think were necessary to start your side activity?		1. Land 2. Money 3. Supplies 4. Personnel 5. Technological resources 6. Contacts/networks 7. Market knowledge 8. Product knowledge 9. Other
13	To what extent were the following resources available before you started your side activity? 1=To no extent, 2=To a little extent, 3=To some extent, 4=To a great extent, 5=To a very great extent		1. Land 2. Money 3. Supplies 4. Personnel 5. Technological resources 6. Contacts/networks 7. Market knowledge 8. Product knowledge 9. Other
14	To what extent did the following aspects play a role starting your side activity?	1. To earn extra income 2. To be my own boss 3. To have flexibility for personal and family life 4. Because of unemployment/threat of unemployment 5. Dissatisfaction with the paid job 6. To have more social contacts 7. Because of a hobby/interest 8. Because it fits the rural lifestyle 9. To enhance quality of life 10. Availability of own resources 11. Discover a gap in the market 12. To continue a family tradition 13. To continue to grow and learn as a person 14. To develop an idea/ fulfill a personal vision 15. To challenge myself 16. Because others were successful 17. To contribute to the community	
15	Is your side activity mainly a hobby?	1. Yes 2. No	If Yes, then go to question 16 If No, then go to question 17
16	Will your side activity remain a hobby in the future?		
17	Will your side activity become your main business?		
18	What other alternatives did you consider before you started your side activity?		

19	Where is your side activity registered?	

Section II. Side activities and government involvement

20	Did you face any problems or restrictions from the local government when starting your side activity?	1. Yes, 2. No
21	Did you receive any grant to start your side activity?	1. Yes, 2. No
22	Do you know anyone who has received a grant to start their side activity?	1. Yes, 2. No, 3. Don't know

Section III. Location choice

23	What was the most important reason to locate your side activity here?	
24	Do you have plans to relocate your side activity to another location?	1. Yes (If Yes, please answer question 24a), 2. No, 3. Don't know (If No or Don't know, please go to question 25)
24a	If you have plans to relocate your side activity please answer the following questions:	
24a	Within how many years do you expect to relocate?	1 year, 2 years, 3 years and more
	To which area do you expect to relocate?	
25	Could you please indicate on a scale of 1 to 5 how satisfactory your current location is for your side activity? *1 =Unsatisfactory, 2 =Somewhat satisfactory, 3= Neutral, 4= Quite satisfactory 5= Very satisfactory*	1 2 3 4 5
26	To what extent did the following aspects play a role in locating your side activity here? *1=To no extent, 2=To a little extent, 3=To some extent 4=To a great extent, 5=To a very great extent*	1. I already lived here 2. Market perspectives 3. Proximity to customers 4. Proximity to suppliers 5. The surroundings 6. The government involvement 7. Potential for expansion 8. Housing costs are low
27	Do you expect that you will move to another location because of the side activity?	1. Yes, 2. No, 3. Don't know

28	Have you already moved to another location because it was necessary for your side activity?	1. Yes, 2. No
29	Do you think that your side activity could be successful in another location?	1. Yes, 2. No, 3. Don't know

Section IV. Future perspectives

30 What is the most likely development of your side activity in the future?

1. I will stop it
2. I will pass it over to other family members
3. I will sell it
4. I will grow it
5. It will remain as it is
6. Other

31 Which of the following factors played a role in deciding not to develop your side activity?

1. It is just a hobby
2. I don't have the available resources
3. It costs too much time and energy
4. I don't earn enough income from it
5. Local government restrictions
6. Other

32 To what extent do the following factors play role in growing your side activity?

1. Land available
2. Time available
3. Money available to invest
4. Opportunities to cooperate with others
5. Market perspectives
6. Because your motivations have changed
7. Other

33 Please specify which of the following you are expecting to increase, reduce or remain constant in the time period indicated.

Use the following: 0= remain stable, 1=decrease, 2= increase

Growth factors	Time period		
	less than 1 year	1-2 years	more than 2 years
hours			
employees			
land			
collaborations			

3 **4**	With whom are you expecting to grow your side activity in the future?	1. More hours of my own time 2. More personnel 3. Family members 4. With other colleagues 5. Other

Section V. Rural Dynamics

Please answer the following questions with positive, neutral, negative or don't know.

35	What do you think the effect of your side activity on tourism is?	1. Positive 2. Neutral 3. Negative 4. Don't know
36	What do you think the effect of your side activity on the landscape is?	1. Positive 2. Neutral 3. Negative 4. Don't know
37	How does your side activity influence the attractiveness of the region for the residents?	1. Positive 2. Neutral 3. Negative 4. Don't know
38	How does your side activity influence the attractiveness of the region for tourists?	1. Positive 2. Neutral 3. Negative 4. Don't know

For the following statements, please tell us if you agree, are neutral, disagree or don't know

39	Your side activity is recognized as a vital source of economic growth to your local community.	1. Agree 2. Neutral 3. Disagree 4. Don't know

40	The side activities will have an impact on rural policy for the rural development of your region in the future.	1. Agree 2. Neutral 3. Disagree 4. Don't know
41	It is important to attract attention from the local or national government to take measures for side activities.	1. Agree 2. Neutral 3. Disagree 4. Don't know
42	The side activities offer a place where people can meet and socialize.	1. Agree 2. Neutral 3. Disagree 4. Don't know

Section VI. Background information on the respondent

43	How old are you?	
44	What is your gender?	1. Male, 2. Female
45	What is your living situation?	1. Single without children 2. Single with __ children 3. Married/partnership without children 4. Married/partnership with__ children
46	What is your education level?	1. Basic education 2. VMBO 3. Havo/VWO 4. MBO 5. HBO 6. WO 7. Other
47	In which sector is your main occupation?	
	1. Agriculture/Forestry/Fishery	10. Public welfare/Health care
	2. Industry/Building industry	11. Law/economics
	3. Service sector	12. Art/Culture sector
	4. Engineering	13. University sector
	5. Accommodation/hotels	14. Sport/recreation
	6. Information and communication	15. Housewife/Houseman
	7. Finance	16. Pension
	8. Education/Teaching	17. WAO
	9. Advices/research	18. Other

48	Is there a connection between your side activity and your main occupation?	1. Yes 2. No
49	Who earns the main income in the household?	1. Man 2. Woman 3. Both
50	What approximately is the total household income per year (in Euros/net)?	< 10,000 10,000-20,000 20,000-40,000 >40,000
51	What approximately is the total income from your side activity per year (in Euros/net)?	<1,000 1,000-5,000 5,000-15,000 >15,000
52	How many years have you been living in this home?	__
53	Did you previously live in an urban centre?	1. Yes (go to question 54) 2. No (go to question 55)
54	In which urban centre did you live before?	

VII. Concluding questions

55	Do you know other people who have a side activity?	1. Yes, 2. No
56	May we contact them? *[If yes, what is the name and address of contact?]*	1. Yes, 2. No
57	If you are interested in the results of this study, please write your email address here:	
58	If we need some more information, may we contact you?	Telephone number:

Appendix 2. In-depth interviews guide

Themes	Main Questions
1. Description	1. How would you describe your side activity?
2. Tasks	2. What are your daily tasks for your side activity?
	3. To what extent are your daily side activity tasks 'mixed' with your daily life?
	4. What were your normal days like before you had your side activity?
	5. Are there more people involved in your side activity?
3. Idea	6. How did you come up with the idea to start a side activity?
4. Why this activity?	7. Why did you choose this type of side activity?
5. Decision process	8. How did you realize your idea?
	9. Who or what influenced you the moste?
	10. Do you think that a specific phase in your life played a role?
6. Lifecycle	11. How did you feel when you started your side activity?
	12. Before you started, did you have specific requirements?
	13. Has your start-up motive changed since you started? Why?
	14. Could you describe how your side activity has developed over the years?
	15. What was the most crucial period for your side activity?
7. Rural environment	16. How would you describe the rural area and the rural community?
	17. Did the specific rural area play a role in the start-up of your side activity?
	18. What reactions do you get from the rural community over your side activity?
8. Expectations	19. Have you experienced unexpected problems?
	20. Have you experienced unexpected happy moments?
9. Attention	21. Has your side activity attracted positive attention from the media?
10. Wishes	22. What is your wish for your side activity?

Appendix 3. Tourist areas in the Netherlands (CBS 2008)[1]
(Low rate: 0-5, High rate > 5)

Touristic areas	**Number of overnight stays per 1000 inhabitants**	**Tourism High/Low**
1. Waddeneilanden (Wadden Islands)	220,2	High
2. Noordzeebadplaatsen (North Sea seaside resorts)	21,7	High
3. IJsselmeerkust (Ijssel Lake coast)	3,6	Low
4. Deltagebied (Delta area)	3,5	Low
5. Meren Friesland en omstreken (Friesland lake district)	3,9	Low
6. Hollands-Utrechtse meren (Holland/Utrecht lakes)	1,0	Low
7. Utrechtse Heuvelrug en 't Gooi (Utrechtse Heuvelrug and 't Gooi)	2,7	Low
8. Veluwe en Veluwerand (Veluwe and Veluwerand)	8,6	High
9. Gelders rivierengebied (Gelderland river region)	1,5	Low
10. Achterhoek	3,9	Low
11. Twente, Salland en Vechtstreek (Twente, Salland and Vecht regions)	4,8	Low
12. Groningse/Friese/Drentse zandgronden (Groningen/Friesland/Drenthe sandy-soil areas)	10,1	High
13. West- en Midden-Brabant (West and Central Brabant)	4,2	Low
14. O-Brabant/N-M-Limburg/Rijk v. Nijmegen (East Brabant/N. and Central Limburg/Nijmegen area)	6,5	High
15. Zuid Limburg (South Limburg)	7,0	High
16. Vier grote steden (Four major cities)	5,7	High
17. Overig Nederland (Rest of the Netherlands)	1,7	Low

[1] CBS Statline (2008) Toerisme en recreatie in cijfers. Available at: www.cbs.nl/statline

Appendix 4. Side activities per category and subcategory

	Category	No.		Category	No.
1	**Tourism and recreation**	**121**	**2**	**Service and facilities provision**	**68**
1.1	Accommodation		**2.1**	Beauty care	
	Bed and Breakfast	29		Nail care	5
	Vacation home/apartment	11		Beauty salon/massage	11
	Group accommodation	18		Hairdresser	4
1.2	Mini-campsite	28	**2.2**	Care services	
1.3	Restaurant	3		Childcare	4
				Care for the elderly	1
1.4	Tea garden	13	**2.3**	Events organization	6
1.5	Open garden	5	**2.4**	Animal care – animal industry	
1.6	Care farm/Children's farm	7		Dog grooming salon	4
1.7	Small museum	3		Animal care/animal hotel	3
				Animal breeding	7
1.8	Recreation		**2.5**	Rentals	11
	Canoe/bike/horse/donkey	4	**2.6**	Small shops	7
	rentals	2	**2.7**	Administration services	2
	Tasting room/excursions				
1.9	Other	1	**2.8**	Other	3
3	**Sale of home-grown products**	**92**	**4**	**Arts and crafts**	**18**
3.1	Fruit	12	**4.1**	Galleries	9
3.2	Vegetables	18	**4.2**	Glass studio	4
3.3	Various edible products		**4.3**	Souvenirs/ceramics	2
	Eggs	11	**4.4**	Curiosa	3
	Jam	6			
	Honey	4			
	Cheese	1			
	Meat	1			
	Beer	1			
	Eels	2			
	Wine	3			
3.4	Plants/ flowers	15			
3.5	Wooden products	7			
3.6	Garden and Christmas	6			
	decorations				
3.7	Animals	2			
3.8	Other	4			

Samenvatting

Nevenactiviteiten van burgers op het platteland
Op zoek naar ontwikkeling van het individu en van het platteland

Doel van de studie

Nevenactiviteiten van niet-boeren zijn een belangrijk onderdeel van het leven op het platteland. Ze zorgen voor een verscheidenheid aan activiteiten en diensten op het platteland, en voor ontmoetingsplekken. Toch is er tot nu toe weinig onderzoek naar gedaan. Deze studie is de eerste waarin nevenactiviteiten van mensen op het Nederlandse platteland tot op detail worden bestudeerd. Niet alleen in de academische literatuur is er nauwelijks aandacht voor nevenactiviteiten van burgers op het platteland, ook in het beleid is het een vergeten groep. Nevenactiviteiten omvatten een uitgebreide groep van activiteiten en diensten die te maken hebben met a) recreatie en toerisme (zoals minicampings en bed & breakfasts), b) levering van diensten en faciliteiten (zoals kinderopvang en hondentrimsalons), c) verkoop van zelf geproduceerde goederen (zoals groenten en fruit), en d) productie en verkoop van ambachtelijke producten en kunst (zoals kunstgaleries en souvenirshops).

Het bestuderen van nevenactiviteiten van burgers op het platteland kan ook de bredere gevolgen voor het diversifiëren en revitaliseren van de plattelandseconomie zichtbaar maken, en hun bijdrage aan de leefbaarheid van het platteland. De gevolgen van nevenactiviteiten worden bestudeerd op twee niveaus. Het eerste is het persoonlijke niveau van eigenaar, huishouden en de activiteit zelf (het 'bedrijf', microniveau). Het tweede is dat van het bredere, regionale niveau.

De onderzoeksdoelen van dit promotieonderzoek kunnen worden samengevat als:

a. het vaststellen van het belang van nevenactiviteiten op het persoonlijke niveau,
b. het vaststellen van de rol die nevenactiviteiten spelen in de ontwikkeling van plattelandsgebieden.

Definitie van nevenactiviteiten

De nevenactiviteit zoals we die hier bestuderen is een activiteit die *thuis* uitgeoefend wordt, die voor een *neveninkomen* zorgt op het niveau van het huishouden, en die wordt uitgeoefend door *niet-boeren*. Een paar elementen moeten daarbij worden benadrukt. Het eerste is dat het om een neveninkomen gaat en niet om een hoofdinkomen, op het niveau van het huishouden. Het tweede is dat de nevenactiviteit thuis plaatsvindt, dus op dezelfde plaats waar men woont en leeft. En hoewel nevenactiviteiten in principe net zo goed door boeren als door niet-boeren kunnen worden opgezet, en ook in stedelijk gebied kunnen plaatsvinden, richten we ons in deze dissertatie exclusief op niet-boeren op het platteland.

Methodologie

Het daadwerkelijk vinden van nevenactiviteiten was een van de grootste uitdagingen van dit onderzoek. Het heeft veel moeite gekost om gegevens over nevenactiviteiten te verzamelen. De reden is dat secundaire gegevens over nevenactiviteiten ontbreken. Dat wordt veroorzaakt door het feit dat nevenactiviteiten nagenoeg ontbreken in officiële statistieken en in databases van professionele organisaties, of er niet in zijn terug te vinden omdat ze ondergebracht zijn in een ruimere groep van bedrijven of activiteiten. In dit onderzoek is een stap-voor-stap benadering gevolgd. Om nevenactiviteiten op te sporen en te analyseren is (1) een pilot-studie uitgevoerd, vervolgens (2) is een uitgebreide enquete gehouden, en ten slotte zijn (3) diepte-interviews gehouden.

Het onderzoek is uitgevoerd in plattelandsgebieden in Nederland. Een bijzondere karakteristiek van het Nederlandse platteland is dat het relatief sterk verstedelijkt is. Vanaf vrijwel elke plek op het platteland kan binnen een half uur een stad bereikt worden. Dat betekent dat stedelingen het platteland gemakkelijk kunnen bereiken, en als gevolg daarvan zijn veel stedelingen in staat aankopen te doen op het platteland en is er een relatief grote vraag naar toeristische en recreatieve activiteiten. Anderzijds kunnen vanwege de pendelmogelijkheden mensen op het platteland (blijven) wonen en dat biedt dus mogelijkheden voor het ontwikkelen van nevenactiviteiten.

Omdat dit onderzoek gericht is op het platteland, zijn stadsrandgebieden buiten het onderzoek gelaten. Uiteindelijk zijn op basis van twee selectiecriteria 36 gemeenten (van de 140 relevante) geselecteerd, verdeeld over heel Nederland, deels random en deels specifiek gekozen.

Resultaten

Nevenactiviteiten dragen in het algemeen bij aan de economische, sociale en milieu-kwaliteiten van plattelandsgemeenschappen. De invloed ligt op het persoonlijke en het regionale niveau. Op het persoonlijke niveau is de uitkomst dat de nevenactiviteiten een belangrijke bijdrage leveren aan het verbeteren van de kwaliteit van het leven en van het welzijn van de betrokken huishoudens. Op het regionale niveau blijkt de directe economische bijdrage tamelijk beperkt, maar er is wel een belangrijke indirecte bijdrage in de zin dat nevenactiviteiten bijdragen aan de vorming van netwerken, een belangrijke sociale component hebben, en voor recreanten en toeristen aantrekkelijk aanbod verbreden.

De hoofdstukken 3-6 bestuderen de effecten van nevenactiviteiten op het persoonlijke niveau. In hoofdstuk 3 zijn de start-up motieven conceptueel geanalyseerd. Twee typen entrepreneurs zijn als uitgangspunt genomen, de klassieke en de lifestyle entrepreneur. De conclusie is dat de motieven om een nevenactiviteit te beginnen vooral lifestyle georiënteerd

zijn, en dat economische motieven maar een beperkte rol spelen. Nevenactiviteiten blijken vooral gericht te zijn op persoonlijke ontwikkeling.

In hoofdstuk 4 zijn de motieven van de eigenaren van nevenactiviteiten empirisch geanalyseerd. Een factoranalyse resulteerde in drie belangrijke soorten motieven: (1) individuele behoeften en aspiraties, (2) economische behoeften en onafhankelijkheid, (3) ruraliteit en lifestyle. Bij de eerste gaat het om persoonlijke motieven zoals persoonlijke groei, nastreven van een hoge kwaliteit van leven, en het vervullen van een uitdaging. De tweede categorie heeft betrekking op financiële overwegingen (inkomen) en economische onafhankelijkheid. De derde gaat om de wens te wonen in een plattelandsomgeving. Een en ander betekent dat nevenactiviteiten niet primair als een economische activiteit benaderd moeten worden. Niet-economische overwegingen zoals de kwaliteit van het leven, en lifestyle zijn minstens zo belangrijk. Deze uitkomsten komen overeen met dat wat in veel studies over nevenactiviteiten van boeren gevonden is. Ook in literatuur over small businesses wordt vaak hetzelfde gevonden, meer specifiek met betrekking tot entrepreneurs op het platteland en agri-toeristische bedrijfjes.

Het feit dat lifestyle en niet-economische motieven zo belangrijk zijn als start-up motief, kwam ook naar voren in de diepte-interviews (hoofdstuk 5). De meeste iniatiefnemers zijn op zoek naar activiteiten die hun plezier brengen, die contacten opleveren, en waarmee een gewenste lifestyle gerealiseerd kan worden. In hoofdstuk 5 is ook nagegaan welke voorwaarden een rol spelen bij het opzetten van een nevenactiviteit. De uitkomst is dat het een ingewikkeld en multidimensioneel proces is dat vooral afhangt van (1) de specifieke geografische context waarin de activiteit zich afspeelt, (2) grote veranderingen in de personlijke levensfeer.

De geografische context speelt dus een grote rol. Een gebied als de Veenkoloniën wordt door de respondenten daar gezien als een goede plaats om een nevenactiviteit te starten, vanwege de aanwezige ruimte, rust, lage huizenprijzen en het plattelandskarakter. Voor zover ze er al niet woonden, realiseerden de respondenten zich dat overigens pas nadat ze er naartoe waren verhuisd. Dat duidt erop dat in dit geval geldt ‘nevenactiviteiten volgen de mensen’, en niet andersom. Eerst verhuizen ze naar de regio, pas daarna zien ze dat er specifieke kansen en redenen zijn om een nevenactiviteit te beginnen.

Het tweede soort voorwaarden blijkt vooral te bestaan uit omstandigheden van persoonlijke aard en uit aspecten die met het huishouden te maken hebben. Het multifunctionele karakter van ‘thuis’ blijkt een belangrijke rol te spelen. Door de beschikbaarheid van fysieke ruimte voor hun activiteit, en door de mogelijkheid nevenactiviteiten te combineren met de dagelijkse werkzaamheden, wordt het huis een soort van gemengde ruimte. Dat blijkt ook uit het feit dat de steun van de partner en van andere

familieleden gezien wordt als een belangrijke factor om de nevenactiviteit te realiseren. Vanwege de dagelijkse organisatorische beslommeringen, vrijwillige bijdragen aan het werk en de emotionele aspecten, in huis en in de nevenactiviteit, wordt de steun van familieleden als onmisbare bijdrage beoordeeld. Tenslotte blijken belangrijke veranderingen in het leven (scheiden, overlijden, kinderloosheid) nogal eens tot het beginnen van een nevenactiviteit te leiden. Ontwikkeling van nevenactiviteiten blijkt in het algemeen onderdeel te zijn van veranderingen in de levensstijl van de iniatiefnemers.

Om meer zicht te krijgen op de economische gevolgen van nevenactiviteiten, is in hoofdstuk 6 ingegaan op de groeiverwachtingen. In het algemeen blijkt dat nevenactiviteiten klein blijven. Het grootste deel van de eigenaren (72%) heeft geen plannen de activiteit uit te breiden; noch in termen van het aanstellen van werknemers, omvang van de tijdbesteding, inzet van andere inputs zoals grond of ruimte, noch in termen van het gegenereerde inkomen. Een voor de hand liggende verklaring daarvoor is dat de eigenaren er voor hun inkomen niet van afhankelijk zijn. De lage groei intenties hebben daarnaast ook te maken met de locatie. Op het platteland is de marktomvang natuurlijk beperkt, het is niet eenvoudig meer klanten te trekken. Op basis van een regressie-analyse is in dit hoofdstuk vastgesteld dat de groei intenties van de eigenaar afhangen van (1) persoonlijke karakteristieken, (2) karakteristieken van de nevenactiviteit, en (3) de externe omgeving. Meer specifiek, de factoren die de wens tot groei van de activiteit voorspellen, hebben vooral te maken met de start-up motieven die gerelateerd zijn aan persoonlijke groei en aan meer economische drijfveren. Naast start-up motieven zijn ook individuele karakteristieken als leeftijd en geslacht significant van invloed op de groei intentie. Leeftijd heeft in dat verband een negatieve invloed, terwijl ook blijkt dat mannelijke ondernemers significant meer groeigericht zijn. Kortom, interne factoren, inclusief persoonlijke karakteristieken en start-up motieven zijn significant van invloed op de groei intentie.

Nevenactiviteiten hebben niet alleen gevolgen voor het individu en de huishouding, maar ook voor de ontwikkeling van plattelandsgebieden, in het bijzonder met betrekking tot (1) economische ontwikkeling, (2) sociale revitalisering, en (3) fysieke omgeving. Hieraan is aandacht besteed in hoofdstuk 7. Op basis van gegevens over vier soorten actoren op het platteland (de eigenaren van de nevenactiviteiten, lokale inwoners, andere small businesses, en lokale autoriteiten), is duidelijk geworden dat nevenactiviteiten geen grote directe invloed op de lokale economie hebben. De invloed verloopt meer indirect. Nevenactiviteiten zorgen voor diversifiëring van de plattelandseconomie, en voor het verrijken van de toeristische sector met nieuwe interessante activiteiten. Nevenactiviteiten van burgers maken het platteland interessanter voor toeristen. Hoewel nevenactiviteiten kleinschalig zijn, zorgen ze wel voor versterking van de sociale vitaliteit. En juist omdat ze kleinschalig zijn, zijn

nevenactiviteiten vaak een plek waar mensen elkaar ontmoeten, een ontmoetingspunt van eigenaren en klanten, zowel van verder weg als uit de buurt. In dat opzicht zijn de eigenaren vaak een soort van 'lokale leiders', die positieve ontwikkelingen in de plattelandsgemeenschap bevorderen.

Beleidsoverwegingen

De fysieke gevolgen van nevenactiviteiten blijken klein te zijn; ze brengen doorgaans geen schade toe aan het karakter van het plattelandsgebied, wederom vanwege hun kleinschaligheid en de afwezigheid van groei. Daarom hoeven gemeenten niet bang te zijn voor ongewenste verrommeling van het buitengebied. Anderzijds zouden gemeenten meer aandacht moeten hebben voor de mogelijke bijdrage van nevenactiviteiten aan de revitalisering van het platteland. Daarom is het ongewenst dat gemeenten allerlei beperkende regels opstellen die nevenactiviteiten ontmoedigen.

Conclusies

Dit onderzoek heeft veel aspecten van nevenactiviteiten van burgers op het platteland belicht. Samenvattend kunnen we vaststellen dat nevenactiviteiten weliswaar maar een beperkte directe bijdrage aan de plattelandseconomie leveren, maar dat hun indirecte bijdrage aan de sociale en economische ontwikkeling van het platteland belangrijk is. Het gaat dan om het welbevinden van de initiatiefnemers, maar ook om hun bijdrage aan de ontwikkeling van de plattelandsgemeenschap. Nevenactiviteiten dragen bij aan de kwaliteit van het leven en aan het welzijn in plattelandsgebieden.

Περίληψη

Παράπλευρες επιχειρήσεις στην ύπαιθρο από μη-γεωργούς
Στην αναζήτηση προσωπικής και αγροτικής ανάπτυξης

Σκοπός της έρευνας

Οι παράπλευρες επιχειρήσεις από μη γεωργούς αποτελούν ένα σημαντικό μέρος της ζωής στην ύπαιθρο. Συνεισφέρουν στη διαφορετικότητα και στην ποικιλία αγροτικών δραστηριοτήτων και υπηρεσιών και προσφέρουν ευκαιρίες κοινωνικοποίησης. Παρόλα αυτά, οι παράπλευρες επιχειρήσεις παραμένουν ως επί το πλείστον ανεξυχνίαστες. Αυτή η διατριβή είναι η πρώτη φορά που τέτοιες μικρο-επιχειρήσεις εξετάζονται με εξονυχιστικό τρόπο. Παράπλευρες επιχειρήσεις από μη-γεωργούς σε αγροτικές περιοχές αποτελούν μέχρι τώρα μία ξεχασμένη κατηγορία όχι μόνο στην ακαδημαϊκή έρευνα της αγροτικής επιχειρηματικότητας αλλά και στην ανάπτυξη της υπαίθρου και της αγροτικής πολιτικής. Οι επιχειρήσεις αυτές καλύπτουν ένα ευρύ φάσμα από υπηρεσίες και δραστηριότητες που σχετίζονται με: (α) τον τουρισμό και την αναψυχή (π.χ. camping, bed and breakfast), (β) τις υπηρεσίες και τις εγκαταστάσεις (π.χ. φροντίδα βρεφών, περιποίηση σκυλιών), (γ) την πώληση σπιτικών προϊόντων (π.χ. φρούτα, λαχανικά) και (δ) τις τέχνες και τη χειροτεχνία (π.χ. γκαλερί τέχνης, αναμνηστικά).

Εξετάζοντας αυτές τις μη-αγροτικές επιχειρήσεις μπορούμε να αποκαλύψουμε τις ευρύτερες επιπτώσεις τους στη διαφοροποίηση και αναζωογόνιση της αγροτικής οικονομίας, όπως επίσης και στο ρόλο που μπορούν να διαδραματίσουν στη βελτίωση της ποιότητας ζωής και γενικότερα στις συνθήκες διαβίωσης των κατοίκων αγροτικών περιοχών. Ο ρόλος των παράπλευρων αυτών επιχειρήσεων εξετάζεται εδώ σε δύο επίπεδα ανάλυσης. Το πρώτο έχει να κάνει με το ρόλο των επιχειρήσεων στο προσωπικό επίπεδο (μικρο-επίπεδο), δηλαδή, στον ιδιοκτήτη, στην οικογένειά του και στην ίδια την παράπλευρη επιχείρηση. Το δεύτερο σχετίζεται με τον ρόλο και αντίκτυπό τους στο ευρύτερο περιφερειακό επίπεδο. Ο κύριος σκοπός αυτής της έρευνας συνοψίζεται ως εξής:

α) Να εξετάσει τον ρόλο των παράπλευρων επιχειρήσεων στο προσωπικό επίπεδο και

β) Να εξετάσει τον ρόλο των παράπλευρων επιχειρήσεων στην ανάπτυξη των αγροτικών περιοχών.

Ορισμός παράπλευρων επιχειρήσεων

Η παράπλευρη επιχείρηση όπως την ορίζουμε εδώ είναι *μία επιχείρηση με έδρα το σπίτι, που παρέχει ένα συμπληρωματικό εισόδημα σε οικογενειακό επίπεδο και διεξάγεται σε αγροτικές περιοχές από μη-γεωργούς.* Μερικά στοιχεία του ορισμού πρέπει να διευκρινιστούν. Πρώτον, οι παράπλευρες επιχειρήσεις παρέχουν μόνο ένα δευτερεύον εισόδημα και όχι το κύριο

εισόδημα για την οικογένεια. Δεύτερον, οι επιχειρήσεις αυτές έχουν έδρα το σπίτι. Αυτό σημαίνει ότι διεξάγονται στον ευρύτερο χώρο του σπιτιού. Επιπλέον, παρόλο που ο όρος παράπλευρες επιχειρήσεις μπορεί να εφαρμοστεί τόσο σε γεωργούς όσο και σε μή-γεωργούς, όπως επίσης σε αγροτικές και σε αστικές περιοχές, σε αυτή τη διδακτορική διατριβή εστιάζουμε μόνο σε μη-γεωργούς επιχειρηματίες και μόνο σε αγροτικές περιοχές.

Μεθοδολογία

Βρίσκοντας κυριολεκτικά τις παράπλευρες επιχειρήσεις ήταν από τις μεγάλες προκλήσεις στην συλλογή δεδομένων. Αυτό στηρίζεται στο γεγονός ότι προηγούμενες βάσεις δεδομένων δεν είναι διαθέσιμες εκ των προτέρων. Οι παράπλευρες επιχειρήσεις είναι κυριολεκτικά 'αόρατες' σε αρχεία και βάσεις δεδομένων επίσημων οργανισμών. Η κύρια μέριμνά μας λοιπόν επικεντρώθηκε εκεί. Επειδή ήταν δύσκολο να βρεθούν και να εξεταστούν οι παράπλευρες επιχειρήσεις, αυτή η έρευνα χωρίστηκε σε τρείς κύριες φάσεις ώστε να διευκολύνει την διαδικασία συλλογής δεδομένων: (1) η πιλοτική έρευνα, (2) το ερωτηματολόγιο και (3) οι (σε βάθος) συνεντεύξεις.

Αυτή η έρευνα διεξάχθηκε στην Ολλανδική ύπαιθρο. Ένα σημαντικό και κύριο χαρακτηριστικό της Ολλανδίας είναι ότι η ύπαιθρός της είναι σχετικά αστικοποιημένη. Οι πόλεις της γενικά μπορούν να προσεγγιστούν μέσα σε μισή ώρα από οποιοδήποτε σημείο της Ολλανδίας. Αυτό σημαίνει ότι η πρόσβαση σε αγροτικές περιοχές είναι εύκολη και αυτό έχει σαν αποτέλεσμα να υπάρχει μεγάλη ζήτηση για τουριστικές δραστηριότητες. Επιπλέον, η εύκολη πρόσβαση της υπαίθρου διευκολύνει πολλούς να κατοικήσουν σε αγροτικές περιοχές, να ταξιδεύουν κάθε μέρα στην δουλειά τους και αυτό διευκολύνει την ανάπτυξη μικρών επιχειρήσεων από το σπίτι.

Επειδή αυτή η έρευνα διεξάγεται σε αγροτικές περιοχές και εξετάζει αγροτικές επιχειρήσεις, αστικοί δήμοι αποσύρθηκαν από το δειγματοληπτικό πλαίσιο. Περαιτέρω, βασιζόμενοι σε δύο κριτήρια επιλογής, 36 δήμοι επιλέχθηκαν (από 140 σε σύνολο) από όλη την Ολλανδία για να διεξαχθεί αυτή η έρευνα (με τυχαία και σκόπιμη επιλογή).

Αποτελέσματα

Οι παράπλευρες επιχειρήσεις γενικά συμβάλουν στην οικονομική, κοινωνική και περιβαλλοντική ανάπτυξη των αγροτικών κοινοτήτων. Οι επιπτώσεις και ο ρόλος των επιχειρήσεων αυτών λαμβάνουν χώρα τόσο στο προσωπικό όσο και στο ευρύτερο περιφερειακό επίπεδο. Στο προσωπικό επίπεδο τα αποτελέσματα δείχνουν ότι, οι παράπλευρες επιχειρήσεις παίζουν ένα σπουδαίο ρόλο στην βελτίωση της ποιότητας ζωής των ανθρώπων, ενώ στο περιφεριακό επίπεδο τα αποτελέσματα δείχνουν ότι οι επιχειρήσεις αυτές δεν έχουν άμεση οικονομική επίπτωση αλλά είναι σημαντικές για την κοινωνική ανάπτυξη της υπαίθρου.

Τα κεφάλαια 3-6 εξετάζουν τις παράπλευρες επιχειρήσεις στο προσωπικό επίπεδο. Το κεφάλαιο 3 εξετάζει τα ενακτήρια κίνητρα μικρο-επιχειρήσεων από δύο τύπους επιχειρηματίες έτσι όπως αναφέρονται στην βιβλιογραφία, τους κλασικούς και τους lifestyle επιχειρηματίες (αυτούς δηλαδή που η επιχειρηματικότητα συμβαδίζει με τον προσωπικό τους τρόπο ζωής). Αυτή η επιλογή έγινε για να εξετάσουμε θεωρητικά πού εντάσονται οι επιχειρηματίες που ασχολούνται με παράπλευρες επιχειρήσεις. Από αυτό το κεφάλαιο συμπεραίνουμε ότι τα ενακτήρια κίνητρα των παράπλευρων επιχειρήσεων φαίνεται να είναι προσανατολισμένα προς το lifestyle, ενώ οικονομικά κριτήρια δέν φαίνεται να παίζουν σπουδαίο ρόλο. Οι επιχειρηματίες αυτοί είναι προσανατολισμένοι κυρίως προς την προσωπική τους ανάπτυξη.

Το κεφάλαιο 4 εξετάζει εμπειρικά τα κίνητρα των ιδιοκτήτων παράπλευρων επιχειρήσεων. Με την βοήθεια της παραγοντικής ανάλυσης, τα αποτελέσματα επιδικνύουν ότι τρία κύρια κίνητρα παίζουν τον πιο σπουδαίο ρόλο στην απόφαση να αρχίσουν μία παράπλευρη επιχείρηση, αυτά είναι: (1) οι προσωπικές επιδιώξεις και ασχολίες, (2) η οικονομική ευεξία και ανεξαρτησία και τέλος (3) η αγροτικότητα και ο τρόπος ζωής. Το πρώτο περιλαμβάνει κίνητρα που σχετίζονται με την προσωπική ανάπτυξη και την βελτίωση του επίπεδου ζωής. Το δεύτερο σχετίζεται με οικονομικά οφέλη και την προσωπική ανεξαρτησία και το τελευταίο σχετίζεται με την ανάγκη να ζήσουν κοντά στην ύπαιθρο. Αυτά υποδεικνύουν ότι οι παράπλευρες επιχειρήσεις δεν θα πρέπει να αξιολογούνται με οικονομικά κριτήρια. Μή-οικονομικά κριτήρια, όπως ποιότητα και τρόπος ζωής είναι πιο σημαντικά από τα οικονομικά. Τα αποτελέσματα αυτής της έρευνας συμπίπτουν με τα ενακτήρια κίνητρα στο πλαίσιο ερευνών σε αγρότες με πολλαπλές δραστηριότητες όπως επίσης και με έρευνες σε μικρές επιχειρήσεις και ποιό συγκεκριμένα σε αγρο-τουριστικές επιχειρήσεις.

Το γεγονός ότι μη οικονομικά κίνητρα παίζουν σπουδαίο ρόλο ως κίνητρα εκκίνησης των παράπλευρων επιχειρήσεων, επιβεβαιώθηκε μέσω συνεντεύξεων στο κεφάλαιο 5. Οι περισσότεροι ιδιοκτήτες είναι σε αναζήτηση μιας μικρο-επιχείρησης που τους προσφέρει ευχαρίστηση, ένα τρόπο να κοινωνικοποιηθούν, όπως επίσης στο να πραγματοποιήσουν ένα επιθυμητό τρόπο ζωής. Εκτός από παράγοντες εκκίνησης, το κεφάλαιο 5 εξετάζει επίσης και το εξής ερώτημα: Τί βοηθά την ενεργοποίηση των παράπλευρων αυτών επιχειρήσεων? Τα αποτελέσματα αποδεικνύουν ότι αρχίζοντας μία παράπλευρη επιχείρηση είναι μία σύνθετη και πολυσδιάστατη διαδικασία που εξαρτάται από: (1) το συγκεκριμένο γεωγραφικό πλαίσιο όπου και λαμβάνουν χώρα και (2) ένα σύνολο παραγόντων και περιστάσεων που κινούν τον μοχλό εκκίνησης τους. Πρώτα, το συγκεκριμένο γεωγραφικό πλαίσιο παίζει ένα σημαντικό ρόλο στην έναρξη πολλών παράπλευρων επιχειρήσεων. Μία αγροτική περιοχή με σημαντικό δημογραφικό πρόβλημα, στα βορειοανατολικά της Ολλανδίας (τα Veenkoloniën), παρέχοντας επαρκές χώρο, ήσυχο περιβάλλον, αγροτικότητα όπως επίσης και σχετικά χαμηλές τιμές

στέγασης, συγκρινόμενη με άλλες περιοχές της Ολλανδίας, βρέθηκε να αποτελεί ένα σημαντικό παράγοντα που βοηθά στην έναρξη των παράπλευρων επιχειρήσεων. Οι ερωτηθέντες αποφασίζουν να ενασχοληθούν με μία τέτοια μικρο-επιχείρηση αφού πρώτα μετακόμισουν σε αυτήν την περιοχή. Με λίγα λόγια αυτό δείχνει ότι 'οι παράπλευρες επιχειρήσεις ακολουθούν τους ανθρώπους' και όχι το αντίθετο. Δεύτερον, τα ενακτήρια κίνητρα των επιχειρήσεων αυτών είναι ενσωματωμένα με προσωπικές και οικογενειακές περιστάσεις. Επεκτανόμενοι περαιτέρω, το πολυλειτουργικό σπιτικό φαίνεται να αποτελεί ένα σημαντικό μέρος στην πραγματοποίηση των παράπλευρων επιχειρήσεων. Παρέχοντας επαρκή χώρο και συνδιάζοντας τις παράπλευρες επιχειρήσεις με καθημερινά οργανωτικά καθήκοντα, το σπίτι λειτουργεί σαν ένας μικτός χώρος. Επιπλέον, η υποστήριξη του συντρόφου και ποιό ευρύτερα της οικογένειας βιώνεται σαν ένας σημαντικός παράγοντας στην πραγματοποίηση αυτών των επιχειρήσεων. Μέσω καθημερινών οργανωτικών ζητημάτων, εθελοντικής συνεισφοράς στη δουλειά και συναισθηματικών καθηκόντων στο σπίτι και στις παράπλευρες επιχειρήσεις, η συνεισφορά από την οικογένεια εκτιμάται ως αναπόσπαστο μέρος αυτών των επιχειρήσεων. Τέλος, σημαντικές μεταβατικές περιόδοι στην ζωή των ανθρώπων φαίνεται επίσης να επηρεάζουν την διαδικασία λήψης αποφάσεων, δίνοντας τους έτσι την ευκαιρία να ανοίξουν μία παράπλευρη επιχείρηση. Η ανάπτυξη των παράπλευρων επιχειρήσεων είναι μέρος μίας ευρύτερης διαδικασίας αλλάζοντας γενικότερα τον τρόπο ζωής των ιδρυτών τους.

Για να εξετάσουμε την οικονομική επίπτωση των επιχειρήσεων αυτών, εξετάσαμε στο κεφάλαιο 6 τις προσδοκίες ανάπτυξης των ιδιοκτητών τους. Οι παράπλευρες επιχειρήσεις γενικά παραμένουν μικρές. Οι αναλύσεις αυτής της έρευνας υποδεικνύουν ότι η πλειοψηφία των ιδιοκτητών αυτών των επιχειρήσεων (72%), δεν έχουν προσδοκίες να επεκτείνουν τις επιχειρήσεις τους (όχι σε αριθμούς εργαζομένων, χρόνο που δαπανούν και ούτε σε εισόδημα). Με βάση την βιβλιογραφία για την ανάπτυξη αγροτικών μικρο-επιχειρήσεων, το επιχείρημα ότι η περαιτέρω ανάπτυξη τους δεν είναι μέσα στους κύριους σκοπούς των ιδιοκτητών τους, αποδεικνύεται εμπειρωγνωμικά και για τις παράπλευρες επιχειρήσεις. Αυτό σημαίνει με άλλα λόγια ότι οι παράπλευρες επιχειρήσεις συμπεριφέρονται παρόμοια με τις αγροτικές μικρές επιχειρήσεις. Μία πιθανή εξήγηση αυτής της περιορισμένης ανάπτυξης βασίζεται στο γεγονός ότι οι ιδιοκτήτες δεν χρειάζεται να ζήσουν βασιζόμενοι μόνο στις παράπλευρες επιχειρήσεις. Η έλλειψη προσδοκιών ανάπτυξης μπορεί επίσης να βασίζεται και στο ίδιο το αγροτικό περιβάλλον όπου, μεγάλες αποστάσεις, η περιορισμένη προσέγγιση αγορών και πελατών αποτελούν σημαντικές προκλήσεις στην περαιτέρω ανάπτυξη τους. Επιπλέον, μέσω της μεθόδου παλινδρομικής ανάλυσης, αυτή η μελέτη απέδειξε ότι οι προσδοκίες ανάπτυξης των ιδιοκτητών παράπλευρων επιχειρήσεων εξαρτάται από: (1) προσωπικά χαρακτηριστικά, (2) τα χαρακτηριστικά των επιχειρήσεων αυτών και (3) εξωτερικούς παράγοντες. Ποιό

συγκεκριμένα, αυτή η μελέτη αποκαλύπτει ότι οι παράγοντες που προβλέπουν την ανάπτυξη των παράπλευρων επιχειρήσεων εξαρτάται από τα ενακτήρια κίνητρα που σχετίζονται με την προσωπική ανάπτυξη και την οικονομική ευεξία του ατόμου. Ειδικότερα, αυτά τα κίνητρα παίζουν πρωτεύοντα ρόλο στην πρόβλεψη της ανάπτυξης των παράπλευρων επιχειρήσεων. Εκτός των ενακτήριων κινήτρων, προσωπικά χαρακτηριστικά όπως η ηλικία και το φύλο σχετίζονται σημαντικά με την ανάπτυξή των επιχειρήσεων. Η ηλικία βρέθηκε να σχετίζεται στατιστικά αρνητικά με την ανάπτυξη, ενώ το φύλο σχετίζεται θετικά με τις προσδοκίες ανάπτυξης. Συνεπώς, εσωτερικοί παράγοντες περιλαμβάνοντας προσωπικά χαρακτηριστικά και ενακτήρια κίνητρα ξεχωρίζουν ως ιδιαίτερα σημαντικά για την ανάπτυξη των επιχειρήσεων.

Οι παράπλευρες επιχειρήσεις βρέθηκαν να διαδραματίζουν σημαντικό ρόλο όχι μόνο για το ίδιο το άτομο αλλά επίσης και για την ανάπτυξη της υπαίθρου (περιφερεικό επίπεδο) σε σχέση με: (1) την οικονομική ανάπτυξη, (2) την κοινωνική αναζωογώνιση και (3) το φυσικό περιβάλλον (κεφάλαιο 7). Συνδιάζοντας δεδομένα από τέσσερις διαφορετικές ομάδες φορέων ιδιοκτήτες παράπλευρων επιχειρήσεων, κάτοικους αγροτικών περιοχών, ιδιοκτήτες άλλων μικρο-επιχειρήσεων και τοπικές αρχές είναι φανερό ότι οι παράπλευρες επιχειρήσεις δέν έχουν μεγάλο οικονομικό αντίκτυπο στην τοπική οικονομία. Ο οικονομικός του ρόλος είναι έμμεσος, κυρίως μέσω της διαφοροποίησης αγροτικών προϊόντων και υπηρεσιών και εμπλουτίζοντας τον τουριστικό τομέα με επιχειρήσεις που δεν σχετίζονται άμεσα με την γεωργία (π.χ. camping, bed and breakfast, ενοικιαζόμενα τουριστικά δωμάτια). Οι παράπλευρες επιχειρήσεις, παρότι μικρές, με έδρα το σπίτι επιχειρήσεις και με μικρή άμεση οικονομική σημασία, βρέθηκαν να διαδραματίζουν ποιό σημαντικό ρόλο στην ενίσχυση και ενεργοποίηση της κοινωνικής ζωτικότητας των αγροτικών περιοχών. Ποιό συγκεκριμένα, το μικρό τους μέγεθος λειτουργεί ως πλεονέκτημα. Οι παράπλευρες επιχειρήσεις προσφέρουν ένα μέρος όπου οι άνθρωποι μπορούν να κοινωνικοποιηθούν. Επίσης βοηθούν στο να εκπληρώσουν κοινωνικές ανάγκες, όχι μόνο για τους ιδρυτές των επιχειρήσεων, αλλά και για τους πελάτες καθώς επίσης και για τους κατοίκους των αγροτικών περιοχών. Υπό αυτήν την έννοια, οι επιχειρήματίες των παράπλευρων επιχειρήσεων μπορούν να ενεργήσουν ως 'τοπικοί ηγέτες' επιφέροντας θετική ανάπτυξη μέσω της ενίσχυση της κοινωνικής ευημερίας στις αγροτικές κοινότητες. Ωστόσο, η επιρροή τους στο φυσικό περιβάλλον πιστεύεται ότι είναι σχετικά περιορισμένη και δεν θεωρούνται ότι καταστρέφουν το χαρακτήρα και την ποιότητα των αγροτικών περιοχών.

Πολιτικές επιπτώσεις

Σε ό,τι αφορά τις πολιτικές επιπτώσεις, οι παράπλευρες επιχειρήσεις δεν θα πρέπει να θεωρούνται ότι είναι απειλή για το φυσικό περιβάλλον. Ως εκ τούτου, δήμοι και αγροτικές κοινότητες δεν πρέπει να φοβούνται ότι οι μικρές αυτές επιχειρήσεις θα 'φθείρουν' και θα

καταστρέψουν την ύπαιθρο. Οι υπεύθυνοι χάραξης τοπικής πολιτικής και οι ομάδες τοπικής δράσης πρέπει να συνειδητοποιήσουν τη συμβολή των επιχειρήσεων αυτών στην αγροτική αναζωογόνηση και όχι να δημιουργούν περιττούς κανονισμούς και νόμους για την εμπόδιση της ανάπτυξής τους.

Συμπεράσματα

Αυτή η διδακτορική διατριβή έφερε τις παράπλευρες επιχειρήσεις στην ύπαιθρο από μή-γεωργούς στο φώς. Λαμβάνοντας υπόψη τα παραπάνω υποστηρίζουμε ότι αν και οι παράπλευρες επιχειρήσεις γενικά δεν έχουν άμεσο αντίκτυπο στην τοπική οικονομία και την απασχόληση, η συμβολή τους όσον αφορά τη διαφοροποίηση της οικονομικής και κοινωνικής βάσης των αγροτικών περιοχών μπορεί να έχει μεγάλη αξία για την ανάπτυξη των αγροτικών περιοχών. Οι παράπλευρες επιχειρήσεις με τον δικό τους ιδιαίτερο τρόπο, ενταγμένες στην τοπική κοινωνία, όχι μόνο διαφοροποιούν την αγροτική οικονομία, αλλά λειτουργούν επίσης ως καταλύτες για την ενίσχυση και προώθηση της κοινωνικής ζωτικότητας, βελτιώνοντας τηνποιότητας ζωής και την ενίσχυση της κοινωνικής ευημερίας στις αγροτικές περιοχές.